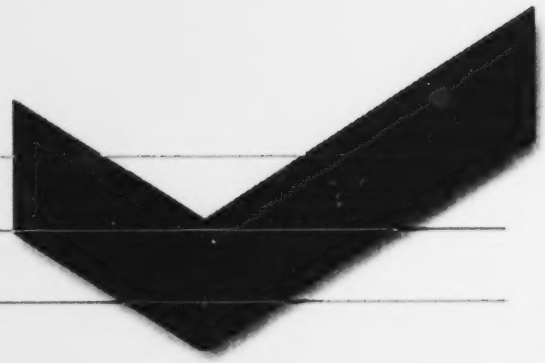
Government
Business Plan

Province of Nova Scotia

for the fiscal year **2002-03**



NOVA SCOTIA

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Message from Premier John Hamm

I am pleased to present Nova Scotia's Government Business Plan for the fiscal year 2002-03.

Never has proper business planning been more important for the Government of Nova Scotia—and ultimately for the citizens we represent. Only through careful planning and budgeting can we make the best use of Nova Scotia's scarce resources.

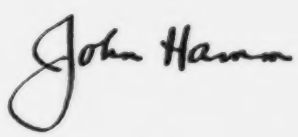
This year is a turning point in the history of our province. We are bringing in a truly balanced budget for the first time in 40 years. A balanced budget is the first, vital step on a road that takes us—and more importantly our children—to a more prosperous, financially secure future.

At the same time, we are continuing to address other important priorities, such as maintaining a good-quality health care system, ensuring accessible education and training, and growing the economy. We owe it to Nova Scotians to make sure that every dollar spent on these and other priorities is anticipated and accounted for.

The Government Business Plan outlines our priorities and goals for the current year, in conjunction with the more specific plans published by departments and many government agencies. As part of our enhanced accountability framework, all business plans will be followed at the end of the fiscal year by an annual accountability report, which will measure the results of our efforts.

Balancing the budget is not easy, but Nova Scotians understand they have to live within their means, and so does their government. A balanced budget is—and will be—a priority of the Government of Nova Scotia for many years to come.

In spite of this, government shares with Nova Scotians a sense of purpose and hope. We know that the province is growing economically, and that Nova Scotians can make good things happen in the coming years. Our goal, as explained in this Government Business Plan, is to help them find the opportunity to do so—this year and in future.



Government
Business Plan
Province of Nova Scotia

Contents

Part 1

Government Business Plan 7

Introduction 9

Governments Planning Themes *10*

Strategic Goals 26

Core Business Areas 27

Measuring Our Performance 44

Outcomes measures 45

Part 2

Departmental Business Plans 51

Agriculture and Fisheries 53

Community Services 59

Economic Development 65

Education 69

Environment and Labour 85

Energy 91

Finance 99

Health 103

Justice 113

Natural Resources 119

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations . .125

Tourism and Culture 133

Transportation and Public Works 141

Part 3

Public Service Votes Business Plans . . .147

Aboriginal Affairs 149

Communications Nova Scotia 153

Emergency Measures Organization 155

Freedom of Information and

Protection of Privacy Review Office 161

Human Rights Commission 163

Intergovernmental Affairs 167

Office of the Ombudsman 173

Public Prosecution Service 177

Public Service Commission 181

Sport and Recreation Commission 187

Status of Women 191

Sydney Tar Ponds Agency 195

Treasury and Policy Board 199

Technology and Science Secretariat 205

Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board 209

Voluntary Planning 211

Government
Business Plan
Province of Nova Scotia

Part One
The Government Business Plan

Introduction

The fiscal year 2002-03 is a turning point for Nova Scotia. After 40 years of spending more than we can afford, the Government of Nova Scotia will bring down a truly balanced budget.

The significance of this should not be underestimated. Nova Scotia has been spending more than it takes in for too long, and the result is the heaviest debt burden of any Canadian province.

In the coming year alone, it will cost an estimated $870 million of taxpayers' money just to pay the interest on the debt. That's money that could have been spent on important programs and services for Nova Scotians.

Balancing the budget is no longer something we would like to do—it is something we must do. Putting it off has only transferred the problem to our children and their children.

But as important as this is, we must have a balanced approach to solving this problem. We must control spending, while at the same time maintaining efforts to help the economy continue to grow.

Nova Scotia's 2002-03 Government Business Plan articulates our plan to find this balance this year with the resources we have available.

Government's Planning Themes

Both the 2002-03 Government Business Plan and Budget are the result of a comprehensive planning process over the last nine months, part of government's efforts to better link business and budget planning.

A series of meetings were held with senior officials, deputy ministers, and ultimately members of the Executive Council to identify and analyse Nova Scotia's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It was decided to focus this year on five overall themes for government:

- fiscal stability
- growing the economy
- sustainable health care management
- education and skills training
- good management and professional public service

Government and its departments and agencies identified their respective priorities and pressures in the context of these themes as well as government's goals. This information formed the basis of policy and budget decisions this year, and the results are found in the 2002-03 Budget and the 2002-03 Government Business Plan.

1. Fiscal Stability

Nova Scotians work hard to give their children a good start in life. Younger generations deserve to know that the programs and services of today, such as health care and education, will be sustained in the future.

Balancing the province's budget, and keeping it balanced, provides that assurance.

Balancing the budget is part of a plan to bring fiscal stability to Nova Scotia. Just as we have met all our fiscal objectives of the last two years, we will bring in a balanced budget in 2002-03.

The Government of Nova Scotia has made a number of significant financial improvements in the last two years. We now have one of the most comprehensive financial reporting systems in Canada. We have cut costs in many areas, and we have reduced the size of government.

Because we have adopted generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), Nova Scotians can see a true and complete reporting of the province's finances each year. The financial liabilities of government are now fully counted on the books. As a result, we have a very clear understanding of our financial picture.

Unfortunately, the clear picture we have is bleak.

Nova Scotia's debt (technically speaking, the "net direct debt") is projected to reach $11.6 billion in 2002-03, well beyond the amount that a province this size can afford. Nova Scotia's debt burden is considerably above the national average.

Compared to all other provincial and federal governments, Nova Scotia has the highest net direct debt to GDP ratio (48 per cent) and the highest debt burden per capita ($12,380 for every man, woman, and child). This means, in effect, that Nova Scotia is poorly equipped to pay off the debt or manage the annual interest payments.

Gross debt-servicing costs as a percentage of revenue are expected to be 19 per cent in fiscal 2002-03. This is almost 4 percentage points higher than second-ranked Quebec and well above the national average of 11.6 per cent.

For every dollar we take in, 19 cents goes to pay interest charges to the agencies in New York and other financial capitals that have been lending us money year after year. Every year our debt grows, we have less money to spend on priorities such as health, education, and fixing our roads.

Where Did the Debt Come From?

Every government for the last 40 years has given in to the temptation to borrow money to meet the demand for day-to-day operations and other spending, including

- operating deficits for spending on government program and services
- Crown corporation capital and operating spending, in particular Sydney Steel and Nova Scotia Resources Limited
- capital projects, such as school construction

Meanwhile, our costs have been rising—dramatically in some areas. Health care costs have been going up steeply in recent years, and interest charges on the debt have been adding up.

And while our revenues have increased, it hasn't been enough. Federal transfers, especially for social programs such as health and education, have been declining, shifting the burden for rising costs in those sectors to Nova Scotia. Tax revenues in this sparsely populated province have not been sufficient to maintain services at national levels and offset the decline in federal contributions.

Of the $11.6-billion total net direct debt, $8.8 billion is the result of past deficits and $2.8 billion is the result of capital spending.

The debt includes $2 billion of losses accumulated by the Sydney Steel Corporation over the years.

In the last 10 years alone, Nova Scotia has paid a total of $7 billion in debt-servicing costs.

Fiscal Measures

A number of governments have attempted to deal with the problem in the last decade, but these efforts have been too limited and have not been sustained. What is clear is that the longer we delay tackling the problem, the harder it will be for our children—and their children—to overcome it.

While there will be those who argue that Nova Scotia should continue to incur an annual deficit, the realities of the lending market discourage this. Simply put, there is a limit to what you can borrow.

Continually higher debt loads will reduce the number of lenders willing to make investments. Nova Scotia's debt is of considerable concern to the investment community. We now have the second-lowest rating from all three major bond rating agencies, which in turn drives up the cost of borrowing money.

Table 1: Provincial Comparison of Net Debt-servicing Costs to Revenue, 2001-02

Alta	BC	Ont.	Man	Sask	PEI	NB	Nfld.	Que.	NS
3.3%	3.4%	14.5%	6.7%	10.6%	11.4%	13.0%	15.3%	15.5%	19.2%

Source: Federal Provincial Public Accounts 2001-02

Presented on a Consolidated Basis. Nova Scotia revenue includes revenue from Nova Scotia Liquor Corp. and Nova Scotia Gaming Corp.

The Solutions

The road to financial recovery, and to a stronger fiscal position, requires

- **Making an ongoing commitment to control spending**. The provincial budget must remain balanced, and surpluses rather than deficits must become the norm in Nova Scotia.
- **Spending money where it matters**. We must maintain appropriate levels of spending in areas that help the economy grow, such as
  - education and training
  - supporting Nova Scotians in need and helping income assistance recipients to find work
  - promoting good health in our population
- **Increasing our revenues**. We must find ways to increase revenues, where appropriate, while maintaining a competitive tax environment, by:
  - encouraging more economic activity
  - seeking fairer federal spending on health and education
  - ensuring that Nova Scotia receives its rightful share of the revenues generated through its offshore oil and gas development
  - recovering a portion of the cost of providing some services

2. Growing the Economy

A healthy, growing economy is a key element to Nova Scotia's fiscal stability. Increased economic activity will generate revenues for the province that will help pay for services in the short and long term.

Even though debt reduction is a priority, Nova Scotia must continue to make investments that will contribute to growing the economy—maintaining infrastructure, preparing Nova Scotians for the work force, and creating an appropriate business climate.

As with any other area of government operations, these investments must be made strategically. We simply cannot afford to spend millions of dollars on high-risk investments.

The Government of Nova Scotia has already made some tough decisions to end further investment in ventures that have proven to be unsuccessful. Sydney Steel Corporation, which on its own added considerably to Nova Scotia's debt, is being closed. Similarly, a decision was made to wind down Nova Scotia Resources Limited, the province's money-losing energy corporation.

Government has adopted a new approach to economic development in Nova Scotia.

Opportunities for Prosperity

In late 2000 the Government of Nova Scotia released an economic strategy, *Opportunities for Prosperity*, which articulated the following vision for the province:

> "A thriving Nova Scotia that by 2010 is the best place in Canada to live, work, do business, and raise families."

Developed through extensive, province-wide consultation with citizens, business leaders, and economic agencies, *Opportunities for Prosperity* identified seven strategic directions for Nova Scotia's economy, confirmed the vitality and importance of the province's foundation industries, and highlighted five growth opportunities:

- the digital economy
- energy
- advanced manufacturing
- learning industries
- life sciences.

The strategy focuses on ways to make it easier for businesses to start and grow, to encourage more innovation and exporting, and to help Nova Scotians and their communities get ready to take advantage of new opportunities.

A fundamental feature of the strategy is its plan for a new government structure to promote economic activity in a new way. This structure includes a new Crown corporation, Nova Scotia Business Incorporated.

Nova Scotia Business Inc.

Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) is a private sector–led Crown corporation that operates at arm's length from government.

Strong businesses mean a strong economy, and NSBI's primary goal is to expand business activity in Nova Scotia. It will serve as a catalyst for business growth and the expansion of economic opportunities.

NSBI's private-sector board of directors, including some of the province's top business leaders, brings a fresh approach to efforts to promote competitiveness and growth in new and existing Nova Scotian businesses.

NSBI's five-year Strategic Plan defines business activity along four lines:

- business attraction
- business retention and expansion
- export development
- business lending and finance

NSBI will focus its efforts on foundation industries and particularly in the five targeted sectors identified as growth opportunities by the province's economic strategy.

The role of business development has become increasingly important in the past decade with the rapid expansion of technologies and the global marketplace. This new Crown corporation aims to produce a healthy return on the investments made by Nova Scotia taxpayers.

Energy

In December 2001, the Government of Nova Scotia released its comprehensive Energy Strategy to complement *Opportunities for Prosperity*. Development of Nova Scotia's energy sector is a critical element in growing the economy.

The strategy, also developed through extensive public consultation, will guide the province's policy and legislative directions in the energy sector for years to come. The strategy recommends

- encouraging investment in research, development, and training
- supporting Nova Scotia–based businesses to grow into world-class competitors
- promoting new discoveries and exploration
- gradual and limited opening up of electricity to competition, including competition for new power generation
- setting renewable energy standards
- tightening air pollution standards to reduce the emissions that cause acid rain, smog, and other health and environmental hazards
- improving consultation with the fishing industry on offshore exploration and development
- harnessing the benefits of natural gas, by removing barriers to local gas distribution
- recognizing coal's ongoing role in electrical generation for many years to come, including encouraging development of local coal resources where economically and environmentally feasible

A key feature of the energy strategy is the development of a new government structure—a Department of Energy—that will be better equipped to coordinate implementation of the Energy Strategy. This will be created in fiscal 2002–03.

Our Foundation Industries

Opportunities for Prosperity confirmed the importance and potential of Nova Scotia's foundation industries: forestry, mining, fishing, agriculture, tourism, and culture. There is considerable room for growth and innovation in these sectors.

Nova Scotia's tourism industry continues to generate significant revenues and export dollars across the province. In 2001, the industry generated more than $1.2 billion in annual revenues The province welcomed more than 2 million visitors. The 2002 Integrated Tourism Plan, developed by the Department of Tourism and Culture with the Tourism Partnership Council, offers a planned, integrated approach to growing Nova Scotia's tourism industry.

Agriculture, commercial and recreational fishing, and aquaculture help drive the economy of our rural and coastal regions, employing over 28,000 Nova Scotians and contributing some $1.5 billion to the provincial economy. Close to 4500 farms produced $420 million in farm cash receipts in 2001. Seafood continues to play a major role in Nova Scotia exports, posting a new record of over $1 billion in 2001. Aquaculture is maintaining strong growth trends, having exceeded targeted production values by 39 per cent for a total value of $ 55.4 million in 2001.

Nova Scotia's forestry sector is a $1.4 billion contributor to Nova Scotia's economy and provides some 12,000 direct and 10,000 indirect jobs for Nova Scotians every year. The value of exports for 2000 was $1.1 billion, including newsprint, wood pulp, softwood lumber, and other paper products. Implementation of a comprehensive Forestry Strategy will be completed this year, and as part of government's management of Crown lands, long range management plans will be prepared for Crown lands.

Nova Scotia's mining sector also contributes $313.7 million to the Nova Scotia economy through mineral production and exploration. Direct employment in Nova Scotia is just over 2000 jobs.

Investing in Infrastructure

Nova Scotia's 23000 kilometres of roads and highways support all of our economic activity. A study by the Department of Transportation and Public Works shows that significant investments must be made over the next decade to bring our roads and bridges up to higher standards.

The Government of Nova Scotia must continue to maintain and enhance this essential infrastructure. This year, government will increase capital funding for improvements that will mean better, safer roads in our communities.

While we continue to make strategic investments in our transportation system, we will also seek more substantial long-term funding from the federal government. Ottawa should contribute its fair share. Recent statistics show that the federal government reinvests less than 3 per cent of revenues from gasoline taxes collected in Nova Scotia.

3. Sustainable Health Care Management

Nova Scotians value the province's health care system more than any other service of government. They have been getting very good care overall, and they want to keep it. But the fact is that so-called "free, universally accessible" health care comes at a considerable cost, and in the end someone has to pay for it.

The problem of rising costs in this sector is not unique to Nova Scotia, or even Canada. Governments across Canada have been seeking a remedy for this problem. Even fiscally strong provinces are struggling to keep up with health spending. Alberta, for example, currently charges annual health premiums of $800 per family, and they have increased those fees this year.

The Government of Nova Scotia is working with the health care system to deliver the services that are needed in a way that is sustainable for the taxpayers of the province.

Federal Funding Is Declining

When medicare was first introduced to Canada, Ottawa shared the costs with provinces on a 50-50 basis. Over the past few decades Ottawa has unilaterally reduced its share of the funding.

In 1994–95, the federal share of health funding dropped to 22 per cent. Today, Ottawa pays just 14 cents of each dollar of health care costs in Nova Scotia, and it is up to the province to come up with the remaining 86 cents.

The federal government has cut transfers to Nova Scotia over the last eight years by a cumulative total of $890 million dollars. Nova Scotia will receive $53 million less in federal transfers in the current fiscal year than it did in 1993–94.

Given the allocation of total government program spending to health care (40 per cent), and the level of health care spending measured as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product, Nova Scotia is constrained to a greater degree than most other provinces to support not only health care spending, but other program spending as well.

Where Does the Money Go?

Nova Scotia is spending more of its available money on health care than other provinces. As a proportion of total provincial government program spending (less debt servicing), Nova Scotia had the second highest level of funding for health care (38.8 per cent) in 2000. This has risen from 32.2 per cent in 1990. The Canadian average has risen from 32.9 per cent in 1990 to 37.0 per cent in 2000.

Health care costs continue to increase faster than the rate of inflation and faster than government's revenues. If health costs continue to increase in Nova Scotia at the rate they have in the last few years, other services and programs of government may be threatened.

Lifestyle factors affect our health. Nova Scotians smoke and drink more and get less exercise than other Canadians, and we don't have very healthy eating habits. That means we're more likely to become seriously ill earlier in life from a range of respiratory, cardiovascular, or weight-related complications.

Our population is aging, so more people are seeking services, and they want more services—especially home care, long term care, and pharmacare.

And although technological innovation and research are beneficial for users of the health care system, they do have costs. As technology and medical capabilities advance, the costs of providing publicly funded care grow along with them.

Health care costs were kept down in the mid-1990s in part by wage cuts or freezes, making wage pressures in the health sector more acute today. The Department of Health is budgeting some $110 million extra this year to cover wage increases.

Highly competitive labour markets have the potential to drive further increases in wages and other incentives. Ensuring that our health care system can attract qualified health professionals means we have to be competitive with the salary and benefits offered by other jurisdictions.

The Health Budget This Year

The Government of Nova Scotia has been working with district health authorities and health care providers to develop multi-year budget strategies to manage health care costs and fund health care priorities.

Government has budgeted $1.98 billion for Health this year, an increase of $130 million over last year. Although it is the single largest expenditure by the province, many health providers will say it is not sufficient to meet the demand for new and existing services.

It is clear that both health consumers and health providers must be part of a solution to curtail rapidly rising health costs.

Nova Scotia must explore all possible avenues to manage health spending or to generate revenues to cover costs.

Over the long term there needs to be a commitment—by individuals as well as the government—to improve the overall health of our population.

4. Education and Skills Training

The Government of Nova Scotia is maintaining spending in education and training in 2002–03 as a long-term investment in our economy and the well-being of our citizens.

Education creates opportunities and choices for Nova Scotians. It gives people the ability and inclination to identify and solve problems, deal effectively with change, use technology, and make responsible decisions.

Training gives people the practical tools they need to apply their skills. It helps them find and keep employment and adapt to the changing economy.

Government is encouraging Nova Scotians of all ages to recognize the value of lifelong learning and take the opportunity to constantly learn, upgrade, and expand their abilities. This year we will further enhance the continuum of learning opportunities from the early years through adulthood.

We will also continue to emphasize accountability at all levels of the education system. This means being accountable for the results of each student—by setting standards and reporting progress toward achieving them. It also means setting priorities for spending and reporting on results.

Reading and Writing

Literacy, a fundamental investment in our province's future, will continue to be a priority in 2002-03. We will do more to promote learning and skill development opportunities in both formal and informal settings.

The Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs initiative will continue to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary-6. The Writers in Action initiative, beginning at grade 4, will emphasize grammar usage, spelling, and punctuation to ensure that all students have access to structured, sequential language instruction. Écrivains à l'oeuvre, for Acadian students in grades 4 to 7, has been broadened to include grammar, punctuation, and spelling strategies.

The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) will coordinate, through partnerships, programs that create a clear pathway for adults seeking credits toward the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults. It will identify adult learning priorities and develop strategies to help attract participants.

Skills and Apprenticeship

Skills and apprenticeship training are vital to preparing Nova Scotians to meet the employment needs of the today's economy. We have strategies under way to help offset potential and existing shortages in trades and skilled labour in many sectors.

The Government of Nova Scotia is working with business, labour and educational institutions to improve the skill level of the existing Nova Scotian work force and develop the appropriate skills sets for new entrants to Nova Scotian workplaces. Priorities for 2002-03 include development of a comprehensive Skills Nova Scotia Strategy and creation of a Partners Forum to advise government on the broad issues and opportunities facing Nova Scotia's labour market.

The Department of Education, designated to lead this skills strategy, will also work with the federal government and other provincial departments to advance common priorities identified under the Labour Market Development Agreement: Youth, Information Technology, Literacy and Employability.

The complementary Youth Pathways and Transitions program will continue this year to enhance the career options for high school students interested in trades careers. Resources are being developed to meet the learning needs of these students.

Government is moving to update its outdated Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act to meet the requirements of today's labour market. There are about 4,500 apprentices actively participating in the apprenticeship program in Nova Scotia, and apprenticeship technical training is available in 25 trades. The Provincial Apprenticeship Board has released a discussion paper and is soliciting public input on legislative changes needed to reflect current labour-market conditions.

Post-Secondary Education

Post-secondary education continues to be essential to a skilled, qualified work force. The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities will consider such issues as quality assurance, accountability, and the role and capacity of post-secondary education institutions.

The board will also consult with post-secondary institutions on the need to define institutional and system-wide mission statements, greater articulation between the community college and university systems, and institutional and system planning to respond to the need for health care professionals.

Government will work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to develop a strategy for growth to respond more effectively to the changing needs of post-secondary students.

In a partnership with industry, government is launching a new training initiative to help post-secondary students in the province obtain critical energy industry experience.

Accountability

The government is committed to providing parents with regular, clear information on their children's progress. A standard report card is being developed, with clear coding that is meaningful to parents and students. Recommendations on the frequency of reporting, as well as other ways to enhance communications with parents, are also being developed.

Student results on provincial, national, and international assessments in language arts, mathematics and science will be published annually in the Minister's Report to Parents. An action plan will also be implemented, focusing on the early years, classroom support, literacy and mathematics, quality of instruction, and accountability.

Government will work with the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities and the NSCC Board to develop accountability measures for the first five years of NSCC's mandate.

Government is working with Nova Scotia school boards to draft a new financial handbook to ensure that school boards are reporting financial results in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

School board accountability, information management, and standardized business practices will also be enhanced in fiscal 2002–03 with the installation in all seven school boards of SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules, along with human resources, maintenance, and student administrative systems.

5. Good Management and a Professional Public Service

The Government of Nova Scotia delivers thousands of important programs and services to Nova Scotians every day.

Whether it's educating public school students, delivering income assistance cheques, protecting the environment, or processing a vehicle registration, government is constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of programs and services.

Because of our budget limitations, Nova Scotia does not have the resources to expand many programs. We would like to build many more new schools, for example, but the funds just aren't there.

However, it is important for the Government of Nova Scotia to focus on good management of all programs and services. We must continue to find ways to improve the way we do business.

This year we will spend some $4.5 billion on programs and services for Nova Scotians. We have budgeted these funds carefully—and prepared business plans to back them up—with the goal of doing the best we can with the resources we have.

This includes

- good management of our limited financial resources
- competent staff to deliver our programs and services
- a client-centred approach to service delivery
- a clear understanding of our core business areas and what we hope to achieve

Promoting Efficient and Effective Management

The Government of Nova Scotia has made changes to its structure and is actively promoting good management practices to make sure we get the best possible results.

We have passed some laws to do this:

- The Financial Measures (2000) Act promotes good policy making, careful spending, and comprehensive reporting of government progress.
- The Government Restructuring (2001) Act formalizes a structure to promote good management, accountability, and human resource planning, including the creation of Treasury and Policy Board and the Public Service Commission.

We are implementing an accountability framework that covers government departments and the many agencies that deliver services on behalf of government.

As examples:

- Business and budget planning is now closely linked, to ensure that priorities are adequately funded.
- Annual accountability reports are required to measure results of efforts to achieve business plan goals and objectives.
- Mandate letters for senior officials have been revised to emphasize accountability.
- To make sure all that funds are accounted for, generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) have been adopted by government and are being extended to third-party agencies such as school boards.
- A review of agencies, boards, and commissions was launched to improve their accountability and clarify their mandates.

And we are encouraging the development of new ways of doing government business:

- E-government initiatives are being expanded, to give the public on-line access to services such as motor vehicle registration, land tenure, and property assessment.
- Departments are exploring ways to improve business processes and reduce red tape for clients, through initiatives such as the Client Service Delivery Initiative at Community Services.
- Government is making an effort to communicate its priorities and programs more effectively to staff and stakeholders.
- The Nova Scotia Business Registry provides one-stop shopping, on line, to reduce red tape for Nova Scotia businesses.

Human Resources

The Government of Nova Scotia wants to become the Employer of Choice for talented young people.

To perform well, government must constantly attract, develop, motivate, and retain a corps of highly skilled and dedicated employees. A professional and responsible public service will deliver the best possible service, at a reasonable cost, to Nova Scotians.

Recruitment, retention, succession management, and training and development have become critical issues for all governments in Canada. The Government of Nova Scotia has seen a steady decline over the years in its staff complement. And even in these tight financial times, the Government of Nova Scotia considers it a priority to take steps to improve our public service.

In almost every government department and every employment category, there are challenges in getting and keeping well qualified government workers. Whether it is engineers at Transportation and Public Works, information technology workers at Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, or legal staff at the Department of Justice, government is having to compete to attract the best employees. The same trend is affecting categories of workers that have not traditionally seen shortages, such as skilled and experienced support staff.

This is caused in part by demographic trends. Canada's population is aging, and Nova Scotia has also experienced an out-migration, of young people in particular.

The difficulty of attracting and keeping government workers has been made more difficult by the continual downsizing of Nova Scotia's public service, as governments have tried to keep costs down in the last decade. Perceptions about working conditions, as well as low compensation levels in some job categories, have also made it difficult to attract workers.

Government is making it a priority to address these issues, in spite of our budget context. The quality of government's management and service delivery—and ultimately the success of the organization—depends on having good staff.

Becoming the Employer of Choice

The Government of Nova Scotia is responding to pressures for human resource renewal by taking the strategic steps necessary to recruit and retain the talent it needs.

The Public Service Commission has been given a new mandate and is focused on developing strategies to address government's human resource challenges.

There is a need to promote a better public understanding of the role and service performed by government employees. Many government employees find their work very challenging and satisfying, and government intends to articulate just how valuable and rewarding it is to work for government and the people of Nova Scotia.

Employer of Choice policies and programs will be developed to support government's current and future work force.

Government is increasing its emphasis on internship, co-operative education and mentoring programs, including

- the Career Starts Internship Program, which gives post-secondary graduates an opportunity to work in the Nova Scotia civil service
- Co-operative Employment for post-secondary students
- the Executive Career Assignment Program, a managed career assignment program to give workers the necessary competencies and experience to assume leadership positions in government
- the Masters of Public Administration Management program, a partnership with the School of Public Administration at Dalhousie University, offered to middle and upper managers in the Nova Scotia civil service
- Leadership and Development programs offered every year to managers—over 2,000 employees have participated so far
- the Diversity Management Unit, which administers programs and initiatives to help promote diversity

Strategic Goals

The Government of Nova Scotia has continued to focus on six broad goals in 2002-03, which remain unchanged from last year.

Goal 1. To put—and keep—Nova Scotia's finances in order

Balancing the budget is our top priority today. It must be based on consistent accounting for all spending, using accepted accounting methods. Government must continue to identify and implement opportunities for efficiencies and improved service delivery.

Goal 2. To put crucial services—health, education, social—on a sustainable foundation

The right investments in health, education, and social services today will go a long way toward making sure Nova Scotians have the services they need tomorrow.

Goal 3. To provide responsible, accountable governance

The Government of Nova Scotia must be well managed and willing to measure and report on its performance. Government will continue to look for ways to improve the quality of service to Nova Scotians. Good management will ultimately ensure that affordable and appropriate services are available when, where, and how citizens want them.

Goal 4. To create conditions that help the economy grow

A strong economy helps Nova Scotians become more independent. It also ensures that the government has the resources to provide services to Nova Scotians.

Goal 5. To provide Nova Scotians with opportunities to learn throughout their lives, so they can continue to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Education is key to success in the global economy. Lifelong learning will position Nova Scotians to take advantage of opportunities like those related to offshore energy.

Goal 6. To foster an environment that allows and encourages Nova Scotians to work, live, raise families, and stay in Nova Scotia

We will work to enhance the social fabric of our communities and to protect our rich heritage and natural environment. We must continue to help Nova Scotians with disabilities to participate fully in community life.

Core Business Areas

In today's environment of fiscal restraint, government must focus on core business areas. These are the fundamental roles, functions, and services that Nova Scotians expect their government to provide. They support the core policy objectives of government.

A clear understanding of government's core business areas—along with expected outcomes—is critical to ensuring performance and accountability.

Government must continually examine programs and activities and assess their contribution to core business outcomes. Resources must be allocated to maximize desired core business outcomes.

The Government of Nova Scotia has six core business areas:

1. health and health care
2. education and learning
3. the economy
4. families and communities
5. the environment
6. government services

We will be tracking our performance in each of the core business areas, using many of the measures identified in the *Government's Business Plan, 2001-02*. For the first time we have included targets that will allow us to measure progress and to report it in future accountability reports.

Some new outcome measures have been added to those used last year, as part of our ongoing efforts to improve the measurement process, and keep up with new national and international indicators.

This year, we have identified priorities at the department/agency and government level to match core business areas, rather than annual goals. This helps emphasize the importance of good management and service delivery in all areas of government business.

1. Health and Health Care

The health of our population—and the need for health care—depends on a number of factors: socio-economic conditions, environment, healthy child development, personal health practices and genetic predisposition.

A healthy start in life can have significant benefits for individuals, their families, and society as a whole. Government supports and encourages healthy child development.

Government also contributes to the promotion of wellness and the prevention of disease and injury, by helping to create healthy environments, improving factors that contribute to poor health, and providing information to promote wellness and to assist those need care.

Government provides a range of integrated health care services for those who need them.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Implemented district health authorities (DHAs) and community health boards (CHBs).
- Implemented an aggressive Tobacco Strategy to discourage smoking, in particular among our young people.
- Implemented clinical services plan to ensure that health care is available where needed.
- Launched a provincial Physical Activity Strategy for Children and Youth.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Increase DHA operational funding overall by 10 per cent and allocate it according to demonstrated efficiencies. Develop a funding methodology for DHAs that ensures equity and consistency. (Health)
- Develop and implement a plan for the care of mentally ill adults, youth, and children, including strategies for mental health consumer involvement, reducing the stigma of mental illness and increasing public awareness. (Health, Community Services)
- Develop a framework for delivering mental health services for children and youth in residential treatment settings. (Health, Community Services)
- Develop a framework for a comprehensive continuum of long-term care supports and services for disabled adults. (Health, Community Services)
- Implement single-entry access (SEA) to home care, long-term care, and adult protection services across Nova Scotia. Develop a means of determining the optimum size, scope, contribution, and distribution of continuing care services across Nova Scotia. (Health)

- Implement the next phase of the Tobacco Strategy to discourage smoking, in particular among our young people. This strategy includes increased taxes on tobacco products as well as enforcement, smoking cessation, and warning programs. (Finance, Health, Education, Justice, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- Further develop the provincial Physical Activity Strategy for Children and Youth, which will support communities and organizations in their efforts to encourage Nova Scotians to increase their activity levels. Work will continue toward the goal of 1200 kilometres for the Nova Scotian section of the Trans Canada Trail. (Sport and Recreation, Natural Resources, Education, Health)
- Develop an approach to address the service gaps in addiction services for women and youth. (Health)
- Develop an enhanced home visiting component to the existing Early Childhood Development project, with funding support from the federal government. (Health, Community Services)
- Identify strategies to improve disease management across the continuum of health care and service. Develop and implement a coordinated strategy to meet the needs of patients with HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. (Health)
- Continue implementation of the Hospital Information Systems (hIS) project to satisfy the need for timely and relevant clinical and management information for evidence-based decision making. (Health)
- Further develop the accountability framework for DHAs, which meets the requirements of the Health Authorities Act and is focused on service quality, resource utilization management, standards development, monitoring processes, financial accountability, and outcomes. (Health)
- Promote a comprehensive physician resource plan for Nova Scotia and continue with implementation of a comprehensive provincial nursing strategy. (Health)
- Make health and wellness information readily available across the province through Nova Scotia's public libraries. A new partnership with the Alzheimer Society—to expand the availability of quality print resources—will serve as a model for the Health Charities Network. (Education)

2. Education and Learning

Government's role is to develop and promote a continuum of learning opportunities from the early years through late adulthood, through formal and informal means.

While most Nova Scotians think mainly of government's responsibilities in the areas of public school education and university and community colleges, areas such as apprenticeship and trades training, community and family literacy, and integrated labour market development are equally important.

The challenge before us is to respond to the needs in a way that is meaningful and effective, while continuing to live within our means.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Expanded the Active Young Readers/ Jeunes lectures actifs initiative to include grades 4-6.
- Piloted the grade 11 Canadian History course in schools across Nova Scotia—it will be mandatory in 2002.
- Enrolled the first students in the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) in September 2001.
- Launched the Youth Pathways and Transitions program to support high school students not destined for university.
- Completed 7 of 19 school capital construction projects.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Continue the Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs initiative to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary-6 and expand the program to provide increased support for grade 7 students. (Education)
- Introduce the Writers in Action initiative, beginning at grade 4, emphasizing grammar usage, spelling, and punctuation to ensure that all students have access to structured, sequential language instruction; broaden Écrivains à l'oeuvre, for Acadian students in grades 4 to 7, to include grammar, punctuation, and spelling strategies. (Education)
- Coordinate, through partnerships, programs that create a clear pathway for adults seeking credits toward the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults. The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) will identify adult learning priorities and develop strategies to help attract participants. (Education)

- Implement a strategy to improve student achievement in mathematics at all grade levels. The strategy has five themes: new classroom programs; books and "school tools" for students; support for quality teaching; more time for math; and accountability for progress. (Education)
- Undertake a professional development strategy for adult literacy practitioners throught the Community Learning Initiative, another community-based partnership. (Education)
- Extend the opportunity for lifelong learning to people in small and rural communities through the Virtual Library initiative, which gives on-line access to books and other library services. (Education)
- Work with business, labour, and educational institutions to improve the skill level of Nova Scotia's current and new members of the work force. (Education)
- Update the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act to meet the requirements of today's labour market; continue the Youth Pathways and Transitions program to enhance the career options for high school students interested in trades careers. (Education)
- Help post-secondary students get critical energy industry experience through a new training initiative that provides incentives to small- and medium-size local onshore/offshore firms to hire students and a diploma program that will start this fall in partnership with PanCanadian Energy and Ocean Rig ASA. (Education, Nova Scotia Community College, Energy)
- Publish the results of student results on provincial, national, and international assessments in language arts, mathematics, and science in an annual Minister's Report to Parents, and implement an action plan, focusing on the early years, classroom support, literacy and mathematics, quality of instruction, and accountability. (Education)
- Enhance school board accountability, information management, and standardized business practices with the installation in all seven school boards of SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules, along with human resources, maintenance, and student administrative systems. (Education, Finance)
- Improve communications between the Department of Education and public school students through the Provincial Student Education Council, which will give students a voice in education decisions and provide then with new opportunities for leadership development and training. (Education)

- Obtain the advice of the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities on issues including quality assurance, accountability, and the role and capacity of post-secondary institutions. (Education)
- Through an Innovation Trust Fund, administered by the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents, the Nova Scotia Community College, and Collège de l'Acadie, help universities and colleges leverage investments from the private sector, attract more, highly qualified research professionals to the province, and pursue new projects and secure more research grants and business contracts. (Education)
- Develop transition-to-employment programs for Nova Scotians with disabilities involved in post-secondary training through the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) initiative. (Education, Community Services)
- Introduce the Racial Equity Policy and hold a Human Rights in Education Conference in the fall of 2002 to highlight and raise awareness of the issues outlined in the policy. (Education)
- As part of the full introduction of the Canadian history requirement this year, provide school boards with assistance to implement the revised African Canadian History 11 and Mi'kmaq Studies 10 courses. (Education)
- Continue the delivery of 19 school capital projects by 2004: six were completed by the fall of 2001, one was completed in March 2002, and another eight will be under development in 2002-03. (Education, Transportation and Public Works)
- Provide quality education and training for a global labour market through the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. NSAC will build on its current involvement in research, particularly climate change, organic farming, and bio-engineering, and expand this activity and expertise. (Agriculture and Fisheries)
- Assist Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie with their merger to become a university/college for the Acadian/French population of Nova Scotia, achieving both critical mass and a wider delivery capacity. (Education)

3. The Economy

The Government of Nova Scotia has a role in fostering a healthy economic climate that encourages businesses to invest in Nova Scotia and create jobs.

Unemployment can have a devastating impact on families and communities. The economy must continue to provide employment for those looking for work. Over time, we must encourage the development of industries and occupations with higher-paying, more stable jobs that will improve Nova Scotia's standard of living.

Setting a policy and legislative framework for economic development—as well as specific sectors such as energy, tourism, and forestry—helps business and industry take best advantage of available opportunities.

Government investments in such areas as infrastructure help level the playing field for companies to operate and compete globally.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Met fiscal objectives.
- Released comprehensive energy strategy.
- Launched Nova Scotia Business Inc.
- Completed closure of Sysco and made arrangements to sell Nova Scotia Resources Limited.
- Continued Campaign for Fairness.
- Released first-ever integrated tourism plan.
- Signed private-sector contract to operate Signature Resorts.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Deliver a balanced budget in fiscal 2002-03. (Finance)
- Invest in the province's economic infrastructure by increasing funding for roads and highways, including improvements such as 100-series construction, repaving of routes and trunks that enhance local economic development, and cost-shared paving of subdivision streets. (Transportation and Public Works)
- Continue to provide cost-effective maintenance services for provincial roads, bridges, and ferries. Additional funds for roads will be provided by the Rural Impact Mitigation program. (Transportation and Public Works)
- Assist businesses throughout Nova Scotia in identifying opportunities for business development and expansion. (Nova Scotia Business Inc.)

- Develop a comprehensive trade plan that will give focus and direction to our trade activities. This will include an analysis of the needs of Nova Scotian companies and the best market opportunities for their products and services. (Nova Scotia Business Inc.)
- Identify appropriate solutions for companies' financial needs—particularly in identified strategic sectors. Decisions will be made based upon the strength of the business case. (Nova Scotia Business Inc.)
- Combine the strengths of two related departments by merging the Technology and Science Secretariat and the Department of Economic Development to create the Office of Economic Development. (Technology and Science Secretariat, Economic Development)
- Monitor closely the state of the Nova Scotia business climate and take action to make the province the best place in Atlantic Canada to do business. (Economic Development)
- Work with local development organizations to identify opportunities to assist communities in economic transition. (Economic Development)
- Complete implementation of the comprehensive Forestry Strategy, focusing on achieving sustainable forestry and forest use in Nova Scotia. The strategy includes expanded private sector investment in silviculture. (Natural Resources)
- Launch a Department of Energy to implement Nova Scotia's comprehensive energy strategy. (Treasury and Policy Board, Petroleum, Natural Resources)
- Continue the Campaign for Fairness to improve Nova Scotia's share of revenue from the offshore. (Intergovernmental Affairs)
- Implement the Integrated Tourism Plan to continue growth of the Nova Scotia tourism industry in a highly competitive global market and encourage integration of research, product development, marketing, and strategic partnerships. (Tourism and Culture)
- Partner with the federal government and communities to initiate a virtual museum, supporting the province's position as a seacoast tourism destination and to promote educational resources and opportunities for Nova Scotians. (Tourism and Culture)

- Implement new provincial Cultural Industries Strategy, including new culture programs with a greater focus on community cultural development and cultural industries. (Tourism and Culture)
- Work with the Acadian community and private sector to develop and enhance product and market opportunities related to the World Acadian Congress coming to Nova Scotia in 2003–05. (Tourism and Culture, Acadian Affairs)
- Build on the foundations for growth in the Nova Scotia information technology sector through the federal-provincial Information Economy Initiative. (Economic Development)
- Work with the Cape Breton Development Corporation (CBDC) and the Government of Canada to provide for a continuing coal industry in Cape Breton by addressing the reissuing of coal leases following their surrender by CBDC and remediation and reclamation of CBDC lands. (Natural Resources)
- Co-chair the 2002 annual conference of federal, provincial, and and territorial Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture. The conference will advance work on the Agriculture Framework Policy Agreement aimed at developing an integrated approach to agricultural issues. (Agriculture and Fisheries)

4. Families and Communities

Family and community ties are highly valued by Nova Scotians—which helps to explain why Nova Scotia is a desirable place to live, visit, and work. For Nova Scotia to achieve its full potential, families need to prosper and be self-reliant. Communities must be engaged, safe, caring neighborhoods where families can thrive.

Government has a role in supporting families and communities to reach their potential and in contributing to strategies to reduce child poverty.

Reducing crime and improving our criminal justice system makes people feel safer in their homes and communities. Reducing accidents in our workplaces and on our highways also improves the safety and quality of life enjoyed by Nova Scotians.

It is important to celebrate our racial and cultural diversity and heritage and continue to enhance our relationship with Nova Scotia's aboriginal people.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Income Assistance and Employment support program implemented, including the Nova Scotia Child Benefit Program.
- Implemented a new Inclusive Transportation Assistance Program for disabled Nova Scotians.
- Started twinning of Highway 101.
- Provided an additional $10 million in Rural Impact Mitigation funding for maintenance on rural roads.
- Conducted public consultations on non-resident land ownership and completed non-resident property ownership mapping for this project.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Develop and implement programs under the Federal/Provincial Early Childhood Development Initiative, which recognize the importance of investment in the early years for children. The components include stabilization and enhancement of the current child care system and development of a coordinated system of supports for families, such as early language and learning programs, special needs child care, training, and expansion of child care centres. (Community Services)
- Complete construction of the secure care facility in Truro; implement a secure care program to help stabilize youth-in-care with severe behavioural problems and help them return to their communities. (Community Services)
- Continue work with the presidents of Children's Aid/Family and Children's Services agencies to review how child welfare services are delivered in Nova Scotia. This will include consideration of a new funding rationale and options for restructuring the current service delivery model. (Community Services)

- Continue implementation of Nova Scotia's redesigned employment support and income assistance program to help people maximize their own level of self-sufficiency. A range of employment support services is available to all income assistance recipients who are or can be ready for jobs. Services for persons with a disability are provided through the Employment Assistance for Persons with Disability (EAPD) Program. There is also assistance with special needs such as work- and training-related expenses, dental, and eyeglasses. (Community Services)
- Implement the government response to the Russell Report on the Framework for Action against Family Violence, including proclamation of domestic violence legislation. (Justice, Community Services)
- Implement a plan to provide programs and services required to comply with the federal Youth Criminal Justice Act, including a comprehensive training program for all justice workers and inter-agency protocols to coordinate services for youth in conflict with the law. (Justice)
- Implement a Road Listing Program (comprising policies and procedures, transportation geographic information system, network management system, and information databases) for improved inventory and management of Nova Scotia road information. (Transportation and Public Works)
- Realize a long-standing demand from municipalities for Nova Scotia Power to pay a fairer share of municipal property taxes. Beginning 2002–03, NSP will pay $26.4 million to the province's 55 municipalities, an increase of $10.7 million over the previously scheduled 2002–03 payment. (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- Implement the new National Affordable Housing program to provide affordable rental housing for low-income Nova Scotians. (Community Services)
- Expand road safety initiatives, including increased regulatory and other activities in the areas of drinking and driving, commercial carrier safety, enhanced safety for vehicle occupants, improved performance of young drivers, reduced number of high-risk drivers, and improved mechanical condition of motor vehicles. (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)

- Continue to implement the Infrastructure Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement emphasizing "green" infrastructure projects across the province. (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- Continue work on a framework agreement with the Mi'kmaq and the Government of Canada, which will outline the process and procedures of negotiations and identify the substantive issues to be negotiated by the parties. (Aboriginal Affairs)
- Increase heritage expertise, information, and advisory services to communities. A new function within the Nova Scotia museum system will help communities with research, training, preservation, presentation, and promotion of local heritage. (Tourism and Culture)
- Develop a policy framework aimed at equalizing access to school facilities for purposes other than education, standardizing rates charged, and ensuring that facilities are available for community and youth use for as many hours as possible. Availability varies across the province, in terms of ease of access, rates, and hours of availability. (Education)

5. The Environment

Our environment is critical to our quality of life.

We cherish Nova Scotia's familiar landscapes, attractive beaches, healthy forests, and clean air. Our natural environment provides us with the very necessities of life—air to breathe and water to drink. It also sustains the variety of plants, animals, and other living organisms found in our wetlands, forests, rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

Government and all citizens must work together to protect our environment, to promote safety, and to conserve our precious natural resources. Sustainable resource management and utilization will ensure that our children can continue to enjoy our natural environment.

Government has a role in creating the right balance between economic development and the protection of our resources. For example, in the pursuit of jobs and royalties from the offshore, important sectors such as the fishery and eco-tourism must be protected.

Our resources must be managed wisely so they will be available for future generations to use and enjoy. Our rich natural resource base provides significant social, cultural, environmental, and economic benefits to Nova Scotians.

We will maintain a regulatory environment that will ensure the health and safety of Nova Scotians, in the workplace and the community.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Established air emission reduction targets for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury to protect the environment and human health
- Several water and sewage infrastructure projects began to flow in 2001-02 under the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program.
- Passed legislation in June 2001 to convert the current land registry system into a land tenure system passed and procured a new electronic tenure system early in 2002.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Implement a new sewage management strategy, which will involve working with municipalities to address current deficiencies in sewage management such as untreated sewage discharges, old and aging sewage treatment plants, and malfunctioning on-site systems. (Environment and Labour)
- Complete development of a Water Resource Management strategy and implement a multi-year action plan focusing on clean drinking water, water quality protection, and water quantity assessment. (Environment and Labour)
- Finalize implementation of an integrated food safety program that will focus on the food continuum from production through to the final consumer and address consumer concerns for safety, quality, labeling, and traceability of Nova Scotia seafood and agri-food products. (Agriculture and Fisheries)
- Work with the agricultural sector to improve its environmental risk management capacity, including water resource management. (Agriculture and Fisheries)
- Implement the Nova Scotia Climate Change Strategy and work with the federal government and other provinces on the National Climate Change Action Plan. (Natural Resources, Environment and Labour, Intergovernmental Affairs)
- Develop mechanisms to implement air emission reductions for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury, in accordance with Nova Scotia's Energy Strategy. (Natural Resources, Environment and Labour)

- Adjust the provincial road salting program to address concerns raised by the federal government's review of the use of road salts and their effect on the environment. Actions will include continuing construction of new storage facilities to increase storage capacity by an additional 10 per cent; expanding the use of Road Weather Information Systems and advance forecasting by at least 40 per cent by December 2002; and implementing new winter service levels with consistent criteria on a province-wide basis by winter 2002–03. (Transportation and Public Works)
- Reduce energy requirements, by installing new and efficient architectural, mechanical, and electrical systems in government buildings, in support of a "Green Building" policy. (Transportation and Public Works)
- Implement new and updated forest management policies; as part of government's management of Crown lands, begin work on Long Range Management. (Natural Resources)
- Work with the Joint Action Group to clean up Muggah Creek and negotiate with the Government of Canada to extend the current funding agreement to cover the final phase of the project. (Sydney Tar Ponds Agency)
- Improve awareness and understanding of the requirements of Nova Scotia's occupational health and safety legislation through more effective communications. (Environment and Labour)
- Better coordinate the activities of hazardous materials response units across government to provide cost-effective emergency response services in all areas of Nova Scotia. (Environment and Labour)
- Chair the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) in 2002–03 and contribute to federal-provincial plans for a national forest strategy and a national forest information system. (Natural Resources)

6. Government Services

The Government of Nova Scotia must deliver the services that are important to Nova Scotians in an effective and efficient manner. This is doubly important when resources are scarce: the province's financial resources must be managed wisely.

Changes in society, in family structures and circumstances, in the economy and the labour market occur at an ever-increasing pace, making it imperative that our programs and services are sufficiently flexible to respond to client needs.

Government's planning, budgeting, and accountability framework has been strengthened to ensure that expectations are identified at the outset, adequate resources are provided to achieve the necessary results, and results of initiatives are measured and reported.

Government aims to deliver programs and services in ways that are both cost-effective and improve the quality of services.

A major priority for government in the coming years is to foster working conditions that will attract and keep good employees.

Government Achievements, 2001-02

- Passed the Government Restructuring Act.
- Established Registry of Motor Vehicle counter services in three counties.
- Made secure on-line Registry of Motor Vehicles and Vital Statistics services available over the Internet.
- Passed Consumer Protection Act amendments in the fall 2001 session.
- Launched Internet access by businesses to the Nova Scotia Business Registry in fall 2001.
- Issued mandate letters to senior management in departments.
- Completed phase 1 of the review of agencies, boards, and commissions.
- Government annual accountability reports published.

Priorities for 2002-03

- Begin the first phase of the Community Services client service delivery initiative, to develop ways of improving service to clients and improving efficiency for staff through more effective business processes and technology. (Community Services)
- Continue e-government initiatives, including enhancements to Nova Scotia Business Registry and Registry of Motor Vehicles applications, an electronic land tenure system in Colchester Co., and public on-line access to property assessment information. (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- Coordinate with national and international jurisdictions to improve security of the data stored on provincial registration systems and related to the authorization of certification documents. (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- Complete the review of agencies, boards, and commissions to clarify responsibilities and mandates of existing agencies and develop adequate accountability provisions. (Treasury and Policy Board)

- Introduce the SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules—a management information tool—in the public sector, including school boards and municipalities. (Finance, with departments)
- Implement a private-sector management contract for operation of Nova Scotia's Signature Resorts. (Tourism and Culture)
- Continue the Management Compensation Project, including an examination of both the job evaluation (classification) and pay component of the management compensation system, targeted for completion in fiscal year 2003–04. (Public Service Commission)
- Continue the Bargaining Unit Classification Project, a review of all civil service bargaining unit positions. (Public Service Commission)
- Further develop the Executive Career Assignments Program (ECAP), a provincial public service management development program designed to give participants experience to assume higher level positions. (Public Service Commission)
- Streamline the government hiring system to significantly reduce the current average time to fill a position. (Public Service Commission, with departments)
- Launch a new training program to provide diversity management skills to managers. (Public Service Commission)
- Plan and support initiatives to develop a high-quality leadership cadre in the public service, including promotion of public-sector values and performance contracts for senior officials. (Public Service Commission, Treasury and Policy Board)
- Develop a corporate communications plan and support the improvement of internal communications across government. (Communications Nova Scotia/Treasury and Policy Board, with departments)
- Appoint a new Ombudsman. (Office of the Ombudsman)
- Continue ongoing implementation of the accountability framework, including annual accountability reporting for more entities. (Treasury and Policy Board, all departments)
- Research and promote best practices on delivery of government services. (Treasury and Policy Board)

- Continue work on a comprehensive user-fee policy for government. (Treasury and Policy Board, with departments)
- Continue work on a program inventory and costing initiative. (Treasury and Policy Board, with departments)
- Continue to implement recommendations of the Red Tape Reduction Task Force, which will complete its final report this year. (Treasury and Policy Board)
- Continue to improve the business planning process, including refinement of outcome measures and performance reporting. (Treasury and Policy Board)

Measuring Our Performance

Government's commitment to accountability includes open and objective reporting of our progress. The Government Business Plan, along with most department plans, includes performance measures to help evaluate progress in achieving its stated priorities.

The annual accountability reports, to be published before the end of each calendar year, will provide a fuller discussion of each measure and appropriate data. Progress toward the target outcomes will be reported at that time.

The following tables present the outcomes, measures, and targets that government is using to measure achievement in this year and over time. Most stated targets are for the fiscal year 2004–05, and we will measure progress toward these targets each year.

Some measures may be used to track progress for more than one outcome.

Where information is not yet available, baseline data and targets will be further developed and modified. We will continue to refine the process in an ongoing effort to improve the quality of reporting.

1. Health and Health Care

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• Healthier lifestyles	• Percentage of youth who smoke	• 25% (2000)	• 22%
	• Percentage of Nova Scotians (age 20 to 64) with a Body Mass Index in excess of the healthy range	• 54.8% (1998–99)	• 52%
	• Percentage of Nova Scotians (12 years and older) who are considered inactive	• 51.9% (1998–99)	• 46.7%
	• Percentage of Nova Scotians (65 years and and older) who received a flu shot in the past year	• 62% (2000–01)	• 80%
• Access to quality health care	• Percentage of health human resource positions (doctors, nurses, etc.) filled in under-served areas	• 85% (2002)	• Maintain 80% or higher
	• Percentage of response times at 9 minutes or less (from ambulance dispatch to arrival at emergency scene)	• 66% (2000–01)	• 68%
• Service quality (under development)	• Measures of waiting times, hospital re-admissions, and home/community care services are under development as part of a federal/provincial/territorial initiative		

2. Education and Learning

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• Better educated Nova Scotians	• School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) results - reading (percentage of 16–year olds at level 3 or above	• 66% (1998)	• 72% (2005)
	• School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) results - writing (percentage of 16–year olds at level 3 or above	• 89% (1998)	• Increase (2002)
	• High School Graduation Rate	• 78.9% (1999–00)	• Increase
	• Percentage of Nova Scotians, aged 25 to 54, with post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	• 58% (2000)	• Increase
	• Number of adults participating in literacy and upgrading through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning	• Number will be based upon 2001–02 program year	• Increase
• A technology - enhanced learning environment	• P-12 computer ratio	• Information will be collected for March 2002	• 1:5 (2005–06)

3. The Economy

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• Improved economic climate	• Provincial government debt as a percentage of GDP	• 45.6% (2000–01)	• Downward trend
	• Overall corporate income tax and capital tax burden	• NS corporate income tax rate (2002) - General - 16% - Small Business - 5% - Capital tax (General) - 0.25% - Capital tax (Banks) - 3.0%	• Competitive with other Atlantic Provinces
	• Marginal effective personal tax rates	• NS marginal/effective tax rate (2002): - Bracket 1 - 9.77% - Bracket 2 - 14.95% - Bracket 3 - 18.34%	• Competitive with other Atlantic Provinces
	• Credit rating by major rating agencies	• DBRS Rating - "BBB High Stable" (2001–02)	• BBB High Positive or A-
• Sound business climate (Additional measures are under development)	• Percentage of work time lost due to strikes and lockouts, compared to national average	• NS - .01% National - .05% (2000)	• At or below national average
• Infrastructure that supports economic growth	• Public/Private capital investment	• Investment per capita - $5,075 (2000)	• Increase investment per capita over time
	• Riding Comfort Index (RCI) - where 0 is unacceptable and 10 is the smoothest. (Measure will be replaced with new International Roughness Index in 2002–03)	• Average RCI value of 7.3 (2000–01)	• New IRI baseline to be established, 2002–03
• Improved economic activity	• Employment	• Employment level of 423,300 (2001)	• Increase by 20,000

4. Families and Communities

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• Safe, robust, and vibrant communities	• Overall crime rate per 100,000 people	• NS - 7,571 (2000) Canada - 7,655 (2000)	• Lower than national average
	• Percentage of Nova Scotians indicating they feel safe while walking alone at night in their communities	• 85% (2001)	• Maintain level of perceived security
	• Work Place Safety - Average number of registered Workers' Compensation Board claims per 100 employees	• Five-year average rate (1996 to 2000) - 8.24	• Reduce or maintain five-year average
	• Road Safety -Casualty rates (fatality and injury) per 10,000 motor vehicles registered	• 123.9 casualties per 10,000 motor vehicles registered (2000)	• Decrease in casualty rate per 10,000 motor vehicles registered (through engineering initiatives)
• Self-sufficient families	• Social Assistance Dependency - number of income assistance cases exiting the program for work	• 4,000 cases (Annual estimate based on program information to January 2002)	• Increase over time
	• Reduction of barriers to employment - Number of assistance recipients in upgrading and training programs	• 4,000 (2000–01)	• 6,600
	• Prevalence of children under 18 years living in low income households	• 13.7% (1999)	• Downward trend

5. The Environment

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• A healthy environment	• Percentage of Nova Scotians served by municipal water supplies that receive water meeting the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*	• 86% (1998)	• 100%
	• Annual provincial emissions of sulphur dioxide (thousands of tonnes)	• 170 (2000)	• 142
	• Number of solid waste regions (out of seven regions) achieving 50% or more diversion from landfills	• 2 (2001–02)	• 7
• A sustainable environment	• Percentage of required value of silviculture, on private and industrial lands, completed during the current year	• 40% (2001–02 estimate)	• 100%
	• Percentage of registered farmers with environmental farm plans in place	• 4% (2000–01)	• 20%
	• Percentage of Crown land with long-range management plans in place	• 0% (2001–02)	• 50%
	• Percentage of endangered species with recovery plans in place within one year after listing as an endangered species	• 86% (2001–02)	• 100%

6. Government Services

Outcome	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004–05
• Open and accountable government	• Balanced or surplus budget	• Balanced budget (2001–02)	• Balanced budgets, 2002–03 to 2004–05
	• Percentage of government entities (departments, public service votes, and crown corporations) completing annual business plans	• 100% (2001-02)	• 100%
	• Actual government expenditure reported as a percentage under/over budget	• 0.6% (2000-01)	• Stay within 1% of budget
	• Percentage of customers satisfied with services received through Service Nova Scotia sites	• 89% (2001–02)	• 90%
	• Percentage of government service transactions performed electronically via Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations	• 10% (2001–02)	• 50%

Government
Business Plan
Province of Nova Scotia

Part Two
Departmental Plans

Agriculture and Fisheries

Mission:

To foster prosperous and sustainable agriculture and fisheries industries through the delivery of quality public services for the betterment of rural and coastal communities and of all Nova Scotians.

Strategic Goals

In accordance with its mission, the department will strive to achieve

- Sustainable and environmentally responsible development of Nova Scotia's agriculture and fishing industries.
- A competitive business climate that encourages economic growth and increases jobs in Nova Scotia's rural and coastal communities.
- Orderly development of agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries through a regulatory regime that supports business and sector growth and development and that ensures consumer confidence and food safety.
- A globally competitive Nova Scotian work force through education, training, research, and community services.
- Public services that meet industry needs and are accountable for results achieved.

Core Business Areas

1. Sustainable Resource Management

The department's approach to sustainable resource management balances industry development with environmental and social responsibility through applied research, technology transfer, generally accepted management practices, and industry/public awareness.

Departmental activities in this core business are designed to move the agriculture and fishing industries closer to a state where the three principles of sustainability—economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially acceptable—are in balance. The department will work with industry to promote standards of environmental stewardship among business operators. The department will also work to ensure that freshwater fish stocks and habitat are well managed and sufficiently protected so that anglers and nature lovers can continue to enjoy Nova Scotia's natural beauty. Education is key in raising industry's awareness of environmental issues and public appreciation of the resource industries.

Major program areas encompass resource stewardship, including 4-H; aquaculture extension services; inland fisheries resource management; marine plant licensing and management; and marine advisory and field services

2. Industry Growth and Development

In this area, the department focuses on Nova Scotia's rural and coastal communities by investing in industry stability, new economic opportunities, and strategic development partnerships and priorities.

Programs and services in this core business area are designed to assist the agricultural and fishing industries to compete effectively in a highly competitive and global marketplace. The department works with stakeholders to grow these industries and ensure that they continue to drive the economy of rural and coastal regions. The focus is on creating a stable business climate, seizing opportunities to innovate and add value to products, and developing new agri-tourism and sport-fishing opportunities.

Major program areas include integrated risk management programs for the agriculture sector; farm investment and industry development; marine advisory and field services; marketing, trade, and business development services; product and quality development; credit and financing services for agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries development; aquaculture licensing/leasing and development; and freshwater fish stocking.

3. Responsible Governance

The department promotes the orderly development of the fishing and agri-food industries through supportive legislative and regulatory frameworks.

Efforts are directed toward developing a legislative and regulatory environment that supports business, protects consumers, and minimizes impacts to the environment from resource development activity. Legislation and regulations must enable business development, be consistent and treat businesses equitably, and not be unnecessarily burdensome for business operators. An effective regulatory climate must also protect consumers, and the department promotes better product labelling, traceability, and adoption of recognized standards of food quality. Promoting proper food handling will minimize the risk of food-borne illnesses and increase consumer confidence in commercial food establishments. Illegal fishing activities undermine the livelihood of legitimate commercial fish harvesters, and the department will work with federal partners to address this pressing issue.

Major programs and activities include enforcement of regulations governing licensed operations and mandated activities; legislative and information management services; licensing of fish plants and buyers, retail food outlets, and restaurants; issuance of agricultural permits and licences and farm registration; coordination of regulated marketing boards and increasing industry awareness of market trends and challenges.

4. Education, training, skill development, and lifelong learning

This area focuses on sustaining expertise and excellence in Nova Scotia's agricultural, agri-food, and aquaculture industries and on preparing Nova Scotians for a global labour market through teaching and community services.

The department offers a broad range of post-secondary educational programs, training, and research and promotes environmentally responsible resource development. These efforts are aimed at stimulating industry growth, raising public awareness, and promoting a greater appreciation of the value of agriculture and aquaculture to the economy of Nova Scotia. Major focus areas for academic and applied research include climate change, organic farming, product quality enhancement, and soil and farm waste management. The Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) is unique in its work on blueberry, carrot, and fur animal (mink) research, which it conducts in partnership with the private sector.

Priorities

1. Sustainable Resource Management

- Strengthen the capacity of client groups to deal with environmental risk-management issues as they pertain to resource development.
- Promote research and innovative technology to address environmental issues as they apply to agriculture and aquaculture development.
- Encourage farming and harvesting practices that meet generally accepted standards of environmental risk management.
- Enhance the capacity of Nova Scotia's agricultural and fishing industries to address and resolve resource use conflicts and challenges.
- Promote an image of agriculture, fishing, and aquaculture as modern, progressive industries that are evolving and environmentally responsible.

- Manage the inland fisheries resource according to the principles of conservation.

2. Industry Growth, and Development

- Strengthen the capacity of the agricultural industry to reduce market, environmental, financial, and weather-related risks and to manage these risks more strategically and for the long term.
- Ensure that Nova Scotia receives a fair share of the federally managed marine resources.
- Support industry initiatives to expand, diversify, add value to products, services, and technologies, and take advantage of emerging economic development opportunities.
- Support increased domestic and export sales of Nova Scotian agri-food and seafood products, services, and technologies.
- Provide stable, cost-effective financing to Nova Scotia's farmers, commercial fishers, and aquaculturists.
- Address industry and business development issues, such as revitalization, new entrants, succession planning, and professionalization in the agriculture and fishing industries.
- Strengthen and encourage government/industry investment initiatives and parallel program and policy directions within the Nova Scotia Investment Framework.

3. Responsible Governance

- Provide a quality evaluation service for industry in the areas of product standards, food safety, education, research, and analytical testing in support of an integrated food safety program.
- Provide a legislative and information management system for departmental legislation/regulatory requirements, appointments, FOIPOP, and records management initiatives.
- Provide a licensing program for seafood processors/buyers and retail food outlets, including restaurants, and coordinate the issuance of other agricultural permits and licences under a policy and regulatory framework.
- Provide a compliance, investigative, and enforcement capacity for the department in all areas of its legislative mandate, coordinating activities with other agencies and industry.

- Streamline the regulatory process so that it is more timely and responsive with a focus on the Crop and Livestock Insurance program and the Natural Products Act.

4. Education, training, skill development, and lifelong learning

- Increase NSAC's research capacity by participating in the Canada Research Chairs Programs.
- Increase the capacity of students and NSAC staff to become leaders in a globalized food system.
- Continue to educate and train students for agriculture, aquaculture, and related fields.
- Seek opportunities to further diversify curriculum offerings to respond to opportunities in emerging life sciences, environmental engineering and biology, agricultural business, new and value-added product development, and aquaculture.
- Provide leadership development and organizational, and decision-making opportunities that will give both Nova Scotia's rural youth and industry the tools they need to meet the challenges of sustainable resource development and become leaders of the future.

Community Services

Mission:

We are committed to promoting the independence, self-reliance, security, and well-being of the people we serve.

Strategic Goals

The strategic goals of the department support government's goals to put crucial support services on a sustainable footing; foster an environment that allows and encourages Nova Scotians to work, raise families, and stay in Nova Scotia; and provide Nova Scotians with an opportunity to learn throughout their lives so that they can continue to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

- Individuals and families are self-sufficient and are able to support themselves.
- Children, youth, and persons with disabilities are protected and supported within families and communities that promote their healthy development.
- Low-income Nova Scotians are assisted to obtain safe, appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing.
- Services are provided in an efficient and accountable manner through more effective business processes and technology.

Core Business Areas

1. Employment Support and Income Assistance

The thrust of Nova Scotia's redesigned employment support and income assistance program is to help people maximize their own level of self-sufficiency. The new legislation and regulations came into effect August 1, 2001, introducing new assistance rates and new employment supports. The services now offered by the department include

- needs-tested financial assistance to cover basic necessities to individuals and families; special needs such as work- and training-related expenses, dental, or eyeglasses may be provided in addition to the basic necessities
- a range of employment support services to all income assistance recipients, who are job-ready or who may require some help to get job ready, as well as services for persons with a disability through the Employment Assistance for Persons with Disability (EAPD) Program
- prescription drug coverage for income assistance recipients

To complement the redesign of the province's employment support and income assistance program, the department provides income-tested child benefits to Nova Scotian families that have incomes under $20,921 and eligible children under the age of 18 through the Nova Scotia Child Benefit Program.

2. Family and Children Services

The future of Nova Scotia is based on providing safe and nurturing environments for children to develop to their full potential. To meet this goal Community Services provides a full range of support services to children, youth, and their families. These services provide community-based, prevention-oriented supports for both children and families. They include

- child protection services that investigate all reports of alleged child abuse and neglect and delivery of a range of interventions, counselling, and placement services for vulnerable children, youth, and families
- programs that support the family unit and foster healthy child development, including subsidized child care; financial support to community agencies to enable preschool-aged children from disadvantaged families and children-at-risk to participate in a "head start" or enrichment program; and funding to assist young children with special needs to attend regular day care and preschool programs
- early intervention services to help young children with developmental disabilities reach their potential by working directly with children and families in their homes
- a variety of community outreach services, including: transition houses for abused women and their children and intervention programs for abusive men; coordination of community development initiatives focused on prevention of child abuse and the improvement of outcomes for children; and community-based residential options for children with physical and developmental disabilities, including support programs for families who care for their children at home through in-home support and respite care.

The department also regulates the provision of services by licensing, establishing standards and policies, and evaluating and monitoring compliance. Licensing occurs with child care centres, residential facilities, small options homes, and foster care.

3. Housing Services

Housing is a basic need and fundamental to personal well-being. To address the housing needs of Nova Scotians the department provides a variety of housing support services to Nova Scotians. These include

- provincial and federal/provincial housing grant programs to low-income Nova Scotians so they can undertake major repairs to their homes
- services in support of the province's 12,500 public housing units
- administering third-party agreements for 9,000 units of co-op and other non-profit housing
- administering a loan portfolio
- developing moderately priced serviced buildings lots

4. Community Supports for Adults

Some adult Nova Scotians need support services to participate to their full potential in the community. To meet this challenge the department provides services that include

- a range of community- and institution-based support services to adults who are mentally and physically disabled
- assessment and classification services to ensure that individuals requiring care and/or supervision are appropriately placed
- licensing, inspection, and monitoring services to ensure that standards are met in all community living settings that provide care and supervision for mentally challenged adults

Priorities

1. Employment Support and Income Assistance

- The new employment support and income assistance program focuses on helping people become self-reliant within their capacity. The program is based on the ability to offer Nova Scotians a range of supports and services to increase their employability and level of independence. To enhance the effectiveness of this program the department will continue to develop and refine a range of employment supports and services.

2. Family and Children Services

- Develop and implement programs under the Federal/Provincial Early Childhood Initiative.
- Develop and implement, in collaboration with other government partners, a plan for a continuum of community-based mental health services for children and youth.
- Implement a secure care program.
- Restructure service delivery in child welfare to include a funding formula and enhanced accountability framework.

3. Housing Services

- Housing that is safe and affordable is essential to an individual's well-being. To further the province's ability to address the housing needs of Nova Scotians, in 2002–03 the department will
  - pursue negotiations with the federal government concerning the extension of the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) beyond its current 2003 expiry date
  - implement the new federal Affordable Housing Program to provide affordable housing for low-income Nova Scotians

4. Community Supports for Adults

- This core business is not delivered in isolation, and the Department of Community Services and the Department of Health recognize the need to work in partnership to develop a strategy for providing supports and services for adults who are mentally and physically disabled. To begin the process, in 2002–03, the department will
  - develop, in collaboration with the Department of Health, a framework for a comprehensive continuum of long-term care supports and services for disabled adults, which are community-based, appropriate, safe, affordable, and sustainable.
  - review departmental licensing policies, practices and resource allocations to ensure that the necessary monitoring, inspection and enforcement services are in place in accordance with the Homes for Special Care Act.
  - Licensing services are to be strengthened through the development and delivery of a training program for staff who perform licensing and monitoring functions.

5. Client Service Delivery Initiative

- This is a multi-year service delivery transformation initiative, designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services to the department's clients through more effective service delivery processes and technology. The project envisions the implementation of a new set of service delivery processes and a whole new suite of enabling technologies that will transform the way the department delivers its programs and services beginning in 2002–03. Specific activities include
  - the development of an information management strategy including an information assets database and information policy framework
  - engaging a partner to help implement the Client Service Delivery Initiative

Economic Development

Mission:

To manage government's efforts to support sustainable, environmentally responsible, economic development activities in Nova Scotia.

Strategic Goals

- To lead the overall implementation of *Opportunities for Prosperity*, the new economic growth strategy.
- To improve the business climate of Nova Scotia.
- To increase opportunities for communities in economic transition.
- To influence the availability of a skilled labour force to take advantage of new opportunities.
- To speed up the development of strategic economic infrastructure.
- To increase industrial benefits derived from major public and private projects.
- To improve capacity for both project and departmental program management and economic policy development.

Core Business Areas

1. Improving the Business Climate

The department works with government, business, and industry groups to identify problems impeding business development and to resolve them; builds a positive and collaborative approach to business development and makes things happen on business immigration, red-tape reduction, infrastructure improvement, and access to capital; communicates issues and progress made on them, both internally and externally, through formal reports and informal communications means; and provides a conduit for business to address its concerns to government and, as appropriate, acts as an advocate for business.

2. Providing Strategic Services

The department develops, coordinates, and implements policies, planning, and programming relating to provincial economic development and *Opportunities for Prosperity*, the economic growth strategy. This includes initiating and renewing key stakeholder partnerships; mobilizing and asserting provincial interests in trade issues, disputes, and negotiations; and optimizing provincial industrial benefits from large projects and government procurement processes at the provincial, national, and international levels.

3. Supporting Rural Development

This area focuses on regional policy development and planning. Through seven regional development field offices, the department manages regional coordination of the community assistance aspects of the provincial economic growth strategy. Regional staff work with stakeholders to build regional economic capacity to support economic growth.

4. Program Management and Operations

This area provides program management support/expertise including program database development; leads major projects supporting *Opportunities for Prosperity* priorities; coordinates collaborative educational marketing initiatives; coordinates operations activity for the department, including funding support for agencies, boards, and commissions and several strategic financial assistance programs; and provides program evaluation services for the department.

Current programs include provincial employment programs; the Economic Diversification Agreement (EDA), administered on behalf of the department and federal partners; and educational marketing. A key component is the coordination of, and funding support for, large strategic projects directed at growing the economy — infrastructure projects, industrial projects, and sector-specific projects, such as aerospace and defence.

Priorities

1. Business Climate

- Develop and use tools for monitoring Nova Scotia's business climate.
- Prepare and implement an action plan to improve Nova Scotia's business climate.
- Develop and implement an agreement to attract new immigrants interested in setting up businesses in Nova Scotia.

2. Strategic Services

- Guide the implementation of *Opportunities for Prosperity* and make modifications designed to keep the overall strategy relevant to changing provincial circumstances.
- Develop and implement a provincial industrial benefits program.
- Together with Nova Scotia Transportation and Public Works, implement the Nova Scotia Business Opportunities Initiative to increase awareness of Nova Scotian companies and their products and services.
- Provide corporate advice on trade issues and trade disputes.
- Together with our corporate partners and the federal government, improve the information available on Nova Scotia's economy, which will, in turn, provide for better decision making.

3. Rural Development

- Implement the Community Economic Development policy and assist communities in transition, such as Cape Breton.
- Lead the implementation of *Opportunities for Prosperity* in rural Nova Scotia.
- Strengthen relationships with partners, particularly Nova Scotia Business Inc., regional development authorities, and municipalities.

4. Program Management and Operations

- Design and develop infrastructure for all programs, including common protocols, better database management, standardized reporting, and evaluation for departmental programs.
- Coordinate the Education Marketing Program.
- Manage projects assigned to the department, particularly large-scale projects to meet strategic economic development needs.

Education

Mission:

To provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Strategic Goals

The Department of Education's goals for 2002-03 are focused on fulfilling the government goals and priorities:

- To improve conditions for learning in the public education system.
- To strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas.
- To provide relevant and high-quality post-secondary education and training.
- To promote healthy, active learning communities and families.
- To foster access, equity, and diversity through and within education and training.
- To develop a skilled and adaptable work force.
- To strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results.

Core Business Areas

1. P-12 Education

This involves working with education partners on curriculum and support services, teacher professional development, teacher certification, assessment to monitor student and system performance, and technology services/resources, as well as providing advice to school boards.

2. Higher Education and Adult Learning

This involves working with education partners on university and community college system development; adult programs and services, including literacy and workplace education; delivery of the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults; apprenticeship training; labour market information and partnerships with business, industry, labour, and training institutions to develop a skilled work force; Canada and Nova Scotia student loan programs; public library services; and information services to youth and youth-serving organizations.

3. Corporate Policy

This involves strategic and business planning, public consultation and communication, policy development, information management publishing systems, statistical services, research and evaluation support, federal/provincial relations, and immigration matters.

4. Corporate Administrative Services

This includes comptrollership and financial management; administering provincial grants to education institutions and audits; and facilities planning, transportation systems, equipment acquisition, financial advisory services, human resource support, legal services, information technology support, and occupational health and safety for the school system.

Priorities

1. P-12 Education

- Continue implementation of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy in 2002-03 with the development of a framework for a Nova Scotia Youth Apprenticeship Program. The department will also develop two interactive technology course options linked to labour market opportunities, Multimedia 12 and Geomatics 12.
- Distribute *Increasing Learning Success* to assist high schools in providing a range of services, strategies, and organizational structures designed to improve conditions for learning and increase learning success for all students.
- Coordinate and monitor professional and development program of studies offered to French second-language teachers by Université Sainte-Anne. The aim of the program is to offer an opportunity for French second language teachers to improve their French language skills while refining their knowledge and expertise regarding the teaching of French as a second language.
- Continue the Information Economy Initiative to support teaching and learning in grades 4-6 through the use of technology. This initiative includes the provision of computers, software, professional development, and technical support. The department will continue to coordinate SchoolNet Grassroots initiatives for the development of on-line learning activities for students and to refurbish computers for schools through the federal-provincial Computers for Schools initiative.

- Through the Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS), continue to provide reliable information on student achievement in specific curriculum areas. During 2002–03, assessments scheduled to be administered are SAIP Writing (ages 13 and 16, English and French), Junior High Mathematics, Mathématiques 12, Mathématiques avancées 12, Calcul différentiel et intégral 12, Chemistry 12 (English and French immersion), and Physics 12.
- Continue with the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which covers all school members. Implementation will include professional development and the development of *Code of Conduct Guidelines* (including discipline tracking and reporting, a policy on formal reference checks for all new staff and volunteers, and a complaints resolution process). Implementation of this initiative will continue with co-operative discipline training and the development of a handbook on positive behaviourial implementation strategies.
- Continue operation of the School Capital Construction Committee, which will report to government on prioritization of capital funding needs for Nova Scotia schools. The department will continue the delivery of school capital projects approved in June 2000, scheduled for delivery by 2004. Three additional schools were approved for construction in 2001–02, bringing the total to 19. Six of the schools were completed by the fall of 2001, one was completed in March 2002, and another eight will be under construction in 2002–03.
- Enhance and/or replace major school building components on a priority basis. The department will work with school boards and other provincial departments to identify and resolve environmental problems. A database of school renovation and maintenance needs will be developed in conjunction with school boards. This database will assist the department in establishing renovation and maintenance needs for schools in 2002–03 and beyond.
- Examine the teacher certification requirements, standards, and procedures within the Atlantic provinces, with a view to achieving greater mobility within the region.

- Update correspondence study courses to reflect current public school program priorities and work through the Atlantic Provinces Higher Education Foundation (APEF) to develop on-line Atlantic Canadian courses.
- Implement a mechanism to support the Provincial Student Education Council. The council will help improve communications between the department and public school students, give students a voice in education decisions, and provide students with new opportunities for leadership development and training.
- Develop and present a video to demonstrate effective classroom practices for teaching Core French at the junior high level. This video will be presented to teachers during professional development days in 2002-03.
- Through the Active Young Readers/ Jeunes lecteurs actifs initiative, continue to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary–6. The department will develop an assessment resource for use by grades 4–6 Anglophone classroom teachers to assess students' reading development, strengths, and learning needs and will participate with the other Atlantic provinces in developing a literacy assessment resource for French immersion students in grades 4–6. This initiative will also be expanded to provide increased support for grade 7 students. The focus at this level will be on high-quality literacy instruction across the curriculum for all learners and effective interventions for students having literacy difficulties.
- Expand the literacy strategy to include an emphasis on grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation through a Writers in Action initiative beginning at the grade 4 level. This initiative will ensure that all students have access to structured, sequential language instruction.

- Develop a literacy strategy for Acadian students beginning at the grade 4 level and extending to grade 7. This initiative, entitled "Écrivains à l'oeuvre," has been broadened to include grammar, punctuation, and spelling strategies. The department will identify appropriate resource materials for teachers and students and will provide professional development through a summer institute.
- Continue to develop curriculum guides and identify learning resources for French first-language core programs for Core French, as well as French immersion programs, and continue to assist school boards with the implementation of French first-language and French second-language programs.
- Continue subject area curriculum focus with the implementation of the Atlantic Canada science curriculum for grades primary and 1. The department will assist school boards by providing a leadership workshop, a summer institute, teaching resources, and the tools young learners need for hands-on, minds-on science experiences.
- Introduce an initiative to assist elementary teachers in planning their instructional program in ways that reflect the connections among the expected learning outcomes in various subject areas. This CurriculumLinks initiative will begin with grades primary and 1 and will include the provision of professional development workshops and resources. Effective use of instructional time will be a particular emphasis.

- Assist school boards in strengthening their elementary and junior high mathematics programs through the provision of workshops for lead teachers and school principals in each region. Emphasis will be placed on effective use of learning materials. The department will begin development of a data bank (hard copy and on line) of mathematics questions to assist teachers in grades 7–12 in designing tests, quizzes, assignments, and examinations. Questions for grades 9–11 mathematics will be available by June 2002. Results of program evaluation research currently under way to assess the effectiveness of the new courses Mathematics 10 Plus and Mathematics Foundations 10 Plus will be available in August 2002 and will be used to inform the strategy for responding to students who require additional support in mathematics.
- Implement Canadian History 11, Histoire du Canada 11, and Études acadiennes 11 in September 2002. The department will assist school boards with implementation of these courses and other courses that fulfil the Canadian history credit requirement — African Canadian History 11, Gaelic Studies 11, and Mi'kmaq Studies 10.
- Participate in a needs assessment, funded by the Software Human Resource Council, to determine its future participation in the Software Career Preparation Project, which may provide transition-to-work opportunities for the information technology sector for Nova Scotia high school students.
- Continue to work within the APEF on projects for Acadian schools and for French second language programs. Such projects include the French language arts program offered in grades 9–12 in Acadian schools, the analysis of a regional survey administered to grade 11 students no longer taking Core French, and the development of a literacy assessment resource for grades 4–6 French immersion students.
- Negotiate with Canadian Heritage for supplementary funding under the Official Languages in Education Program.

- Continue to develop, evaluate, and distribute print and non-print resources to support public school program implementation and teacher professional development, and to provide an archival photographic service for museums. An ESL teacher's resource is under development to include math and language assessments, teaching strategies, program planning, evaluation, and reporting.
- Continue to assist school boards in the implementation of the grades primary–6 and grades 7–9 physical education curriculum. The department will conduct a review of high school physical education curriculum documents used nationally to provide interim facilitation of movement towards a learning outcomes framework for grades 10–12 in Nova Scotia.
- Continue to collaborate with partners on intergovernmental projects including the Physically Active Children and Youth (PACY) Strategy, the Tobacco Strategy, Youth Mental Health Strategy, Youth Sexual Health Strategy, Healthy Eating Strategy, and Chronic Disease Strategy. The department will provide consultative services to boards in their implementation of tobacco prevention curriculum and high school peer-led cessation initiatives, including use of related learning resources. The department will continue to work with other members of the Nova Scotia School Smoking Prevention Coalition and to provide consultative and advisory services regarding *Making It Work! A Handbook for Creating Effective School Smoking Policies.*
- Implement a number of safety initiatives including the distribution of *Physical Education Safety Guidelines* and *Science Safety Guidelines* to all public schools and the provision of consultative services to school boards regarding their implementation to ensure safe learning environments for all schools in the areas of science and physical education.

- Begin implementation of new curriculum for health education in grades 4–6. Related resources, including *Drawing The Line: A resource for the prevention of problem gambling*, developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Health Problem Gambling Services, and *Growing Up, Growing Older: A classroom resource for promoting intergenerational understanding*, developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat, will also be implemented at this time. In consultation with health community partners, the Health/Personal Development and Relationships: Grades 7–9 program will be revised to strengthen the health education component; learning resources will be identified to support implementation of the new curriculum in 2003–04.
- Develop a policy framework to equalize access, standardize rates charged, and ensure that school facilities are available for community and youth use for as many hours as possible. In 2002–03, the department will introduce the policy framework and assist school boards to effectively adjust their present practices.
- Continue to work toward the establishment of an Africentric Learning Institute and implementation of other key recommendations of the *Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education*. Consultative and advisory services will be provided to boards and schools that wish to pilot African Heritage Literature 12 in 2002–03. The department will assist boards with implementation of the revised African Canadian History 11 and Mi'kmaq Studies 10 courses. The development of Mi'kmaw language courses at the junior high level will continue.
- Introduce the Racial Equity Policy. This policy supports the work done by school boards to develop their own racial equity policies and will provide an overall provincial framework to ensure consistency. A Human Rights in Education Conference will be held in the fall of 2002 to highlight and raise awareness of issues outlined in the Racial Equity Policy.
- In partnership with the Department of Environment and Labour and the Nova Scotia Safety Council, provide support for senior high schools that wish to implement the grade 11 Workplace Health and Safety curriculum.

- Review the recommendations of the independent evaluation of the governance model piloted in the Southwestern Region School Board to determine future direction.
- Provide professional development opportunities for members of school advisory councils to ensure that members are knowledgeable about their role and have been given the necessary tools to ensure that they are ready to participate effectively in the council.
- Annually publish the Minister's Report to Parents, providing the student results on provincial, national, and international assessment in language arts, mathematics, and science.
- Pursue pilot projects in school accreditation to give parents and schools greater opportunity to support school improvement. The pilot projects will allow school advisory councils, in consultation with school staff and home and school associations, to develop school improvement plans linked to educational priorities in the school. Those priorities must be linked to evidence of needs, such as parent surveys, statistics regarding student outcomes, test results, etc. The improvement plan will be assessed by an external team. Once approved, the school will implement the plan. After demonstrating progress in meeting its goals, the school will be accredited.
- Develop a standard report card, with clear coding that is meaningful to parents and students. Recommendations on frequency of reporting, as well as other ways to enhance communications with parents, are also being developed.
- Work with school boards on a Time to Learn Strategy. The goal is to set daily standards of time to spend on math and language arts.

2. Higher Education and Adult Learning

- As lead agency responsible to deliver a comprehensive labour market strategy, work with business, labour and educational institutions to improve the skill level of the existing Nova Scotia work force and develop the appropriate skills sets for new entrants to Nova Scotia workplaces. Priorities for 2002-03 include
  - development of a comprehensive Skills Nova Scotia Strategy
  - creation of a partners forum to advise government on the broad issues and opportunities facing the Nova Scotian labour market
  - development of labour market information products and services to support decision making by individuals, business and labour, policy makers, and education providers
  - creation of funding mechanisms to support strategic investment and action through a sectoral or occupational opportunity analysis
- Support the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities in considering issues including: quality assurance, accountability, and the role and capacity of post-secondary education institutions. The advisory board will also consult with post-secondary institutions on issues such as the need to define institutional and system-wide mission statements, greater articulation between the community college and university systems, and institutional and system planning to respond to the need for health care professionals.
- Assist Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie to merge and become a university/college for the Acadian/French population of Nova Scotia, achieving both critical mass and a wider delivery capacity.
- Work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to develop a growth strategy plan.
- Conduct a review of the General Regulations made pursuant to the Private Career Colleges Regulation Act to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the private career college sector and to ensure that consumer protection remains a priority.

- Continue to implement the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) to administer and coordinate, through partnerships, a system of programs that will create a clear pathway for adults seeking a high school graduation diploma. This system will deliver the credits required for the new Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults. Priority will be given to the development of guidelines and procedures for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition component of the diploma.
- Develop a professional development strategy for adult literacy practitioners. Particular emphasis will be placed on expanding opportunities for educators to receive training and support on student assessment and program evaluation. The department will work in partnership with Community Learning Networks and the National Literacy Secretariat to distribute learner intake assessment and portfolio tools, as well as program evaluation resources.
- Continue implementation of the GED new test series in order to provide adults with an opportunity to acquire a high school equivalency.
- Facilitate innovative partnerships to encourage family involvement in learning. In collaboration with the Halifax Youth Foundation, the department will expand project opportunities though the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund. It will also explore the creation of good practice guidelines to direct the development of quality programs.
- Work with hospital and community partners to advance an infant gift-book program, Read to Me!, which supports learning development in our youngest citizens.
- Expand efforts to readily provide consumer health and wellness information across the province through the public library system. A new partnership with the Alzheimer Society will expand the availability of quality print resources throughout the province. This model will be used as a basis for further partnerships with other member organizations in the Health Charities Network.

- Expand the Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program, in partnership with the RCMP and local police agencies, to a province-wide program as a proactive crime prevention initiative. Beginning this year, ongoing funding sources, partnerships, and an administrative infrastructure will be developed with the goal of having an established foundation at the end of three years. This initiative is expected to have a significant impact on both literacy and crime prevention.
- Expand the regional libraries' Summer Reading Program to include reading/writing camps for children. In partnership with the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia, a pilot project will see week-long day camps in various locations across the province. At the camps, children will receive further encouragement and support in reading and writing by selected local authors.
- Examine the delivery of student assistance in Nova Scotia. Issues such as the provision of enhanced student debt relief, new partnerships with financial institutions, regionalization of some services, and a new designation policy for institutions are being considered.
- Revise training standards in 13 additional apprenticeship programs, which will be implemented through the training providers. In addition, the department will increase accessibility to apprenticeship programs by expanding the programs offered through distance education and part-time studies.
- Develop transition-to-employment programs for Nova Scotians with disabilities involved in post-secondary training. The Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) initiative will seek matching funding or donated services from various partners to ensure that these students achieve greater success in obtaining relevant employment following graduation.
- Through the Virtual Library initiative, deliver interactive library service and equal access to library information resources to all Nova Scotians via the Internet. When fully implemented, the Virtual Library will allow users to electronically register for a library card, access on-line reference sources, place holds on materials in their own library's collection, renew items that are out on loan, request that materials be borrowed from outside their regional library system, and interactively receive an answer to an information query.

- Through public consultations and focus groups, review the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act, with the intent of recommending revisions to the act.
- Develop and implement a process for industry validation of all apprenticeship examination item banks.
- Combine efforts with other jurisdictions to maintain current, relevant progress and certification examinations through the testing and implementation of the Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System. Also maintain a database system to provide increased efficiency and quality in apprenticeship and certification services.
- Work with business, labour, and training institutions to address skill development issues to meet the needs of the province's changing labour market. Continue to work with the federal government and other provincial departments to advance common priorities identified under the Labour Market Development Agreement, which include youth, information technology, literacy, and employability.
- Create and fully implement a learning plan development process for apprentices and trade qualifiers that identifies skill needs, provides opportunities to address those needs, and puts in place support mechanisms needed during training to ensure success.
- With the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities and the NSCC Board, use the NSCC's five-year plan review to develop mutually agreed-upon measures of accountability for the first five years of NSCC's mandate. In addition, these same partners will specify the measures of accountability to be used in the five-year review in 2006.

3. Corporate Policy

- Review the recommendations of the Education Consultative Forum (ECF) Subcommittee on Teacher Demand and Supply on measures to address potential shortages of teachers in certain subject areas and to improve the utilization of the substitute teacher work force.
- Continue discussions with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to finalize negotiations on a new Framework Agreement. This agreement will more clearly define roles and responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, facilitate closer collaboration in the development of immigration policies appropriate to the province's needs, and support joint planning efforts to meet immigrant settlement needs in Nova Scotia.

4. Corporate Administrative Services

- In conjunction with school boards and the Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA), implement the SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules in all seven school boards in Phase I of the Integrated Data Management Project. Phase II of the project will include human resources, maintenance, and student administrative systems. This project will enhance school board accountability and information management and standardize business practices. Completion is expected in fiscal 2002-03.
- Work with the Department of Finance, in conjunction with the school boards, to redraft a new financial handbook to guide school boards. The revised handbook will ensure that school boards are reporting financial results in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Direction in accordance with public sector accounting guidelines will be provided to school boards to cover the areas of recording, reporting, and presentation of financial results.

- Introduce a new division, Human Resources and Legal Services, to support activities associated with the move to single-tier bargaining, to maximize the value of dollars spent for legal advice, to support school boards in addressing current and emerging issues, and to enhance effective human resource planning in the education system.
- Consult with school boards to examine whether economies and efficiencies can be achieved by consolidating school board audit and payroll processing activities and functions.

Environment and Labour

Mission:

To protect and promote the safety of people and property, a healthy environment, employment rights, the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members, and consumer interests and public confidence in the alcohol and gaming services sectors.

Strategic Goals

- Promote safe and healthy workplaces, work practices, and safe facilities and equipment.
- Promote sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural areas.
- Promote employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers.
- Promote and protect the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members.
- Promote consumer protection in gaming/amusement activities and the service of alcohol.

Core Business Areas

1. Environmental Protection and Natural Areas Management

The department promotes sustainable management and protection of the environment by developing and implementing plans, standards, guidelines, and policies for the management and protection of Nova Scotia's air, water, and terrestrial resources, including protected areas, and by providing regionally based regulatory approval, inspection, monitoring, and enforcement services delivered through the following broad program areas:

- environmental monitoring, inspection, and compliance
- water and wastewater management
- protected areas
- environmental services
- environmental assessment
- environmental industries
- environmental innovation
- environmental education

2. Public Safety and Occupational Health and Safety

The department promotes safe and healthy workplaces and safe facilities and equipment by developing and enforcing safety standards and providing related educational and consulting support, through the following programs:

- occupational health and safety promotion
- occupational health and safety certification and licensing
- occupational health and safety inspections, investigations, and enforcement
- fire prevention, inspection, investigation, and education
- fuel safety inspection and education
- boiler safety inspection
- elevators, lifts, and amusement devices safety
- electrical safety
- certification of specified tradespersons

3. Alcohol, Gaming, and Amusements Regulation

The department promotes consumer protection in gaming/amusement activities and the service of alcohol through the following programs:

- licensing and registration
- investigation and enforcement
- film classification

4. Employment Standards and Labour Services

The department promotes employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers through the following programs:

- labour standards
- conciliation/mediation services
- Workers' Advisers program

It also provides administrative support and coordination to the following agencies, boards, commissions, and tribunals, which provide adjudicative services for the resolution of employment or labour-related disputes:

- Labour Relations Board/Construction Industry Panel
- Labour Standards Tribunal

- Occupational Health and Safety Appeal Panel
- Crane Operators Appeal Panel
- Power Engineers and Operators Appeal Committee

5. Pension and Financial Services Regulation

The department promotes and protects the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members through delivery of the following programs:

- trust and loan companies licensing and regulation
- credit unions regulation
- insurance industry regulation
- pension regulation

Priorities

1. Environmental protection and natural areas management

- Strengthen processes to support future development of a risk-based model for delivery of environmental inspection, monitoring and compliance services.
- Develop proposed amendments to the Environment Act to update, clarify, and strengthen the Act.
- Implement a provincial water resource management strategy that addresses the critical issues of safe drinking water, water quality protection, and water availability.
- Complete the development and release of a provincial sewage management strategy that defines a realistic path forward for the full treatment of raw sewage in a cost-effective manner; better defines the department's role in protecting our lakes, rivers, and estuaries; and establishes an acceptable and consistent program to rectify improperly functioning sewage treatment systems.
- Develop mechanisms to implement air emission reductions that are consistent with Nova Scotia's Energy Strategy, as well as national and international agreements.
- Revise and reintroduce Nature Reserves Protection legislation to update existing legislation and to provide an improved process for designation of new nature reserves.
- Conduct a review of the Environmental Assessment Regulations to address issues raised by government, the public, and industry since introduction of the existing regulations in 1995.

- Work with municipalities to promote solid waste management and cost-effective options for upgrading municipal waste disposal facilities.
- Coordinate development of a "green plan"—a provincial framework for environmental management for Nova Scotia.

2. Public Safety and Occupational Health and Safety

- Conduct timely reviews of acts and regulations in accordance with requirements of legislated sunset clauses, recommendations of the Red Tape Reduction Task Force, government's legislative agenda, and ongoing program evaluation and review.
- Strengthen processes to support future development of a risk-based model for delivery of public safety and occupational health and safety inspection, monitoring, and compliance services
- Review processes for granting licences, permits, and applications under various public safety-related acts and regulations to identify opportunities to streamline service to clients and reduce red tape.
- Upgrade management information systems to improve service to clients and the cost-effectiveness of inspection services, beginning with the OHS Tracking System.
- Lead development of a mechanism to better coordinate the activities of hazardous materials response units across government, to provide cost effective emergency response services in all areas of Nova Scotia.
- Provide training and advisory support to municipal fire inspectors and officials to facilitate implementation of changes anticipated as a result of the proposed Fire Safety Act.
- Develop a communications strategy to improve awareness and understanding of the requirements of Nova Scotia's occupational health and safety legislation, in accordance with a recommendation of the Red Tape Reduction Task Force.

3. Alcohol, Gaming, and Amusements Regulation

- Improve efficiency and decrease red tape by
  - implementing a multi-year licensing system with respect to liquor, lottery, and place of amusement licences

- eliminating licensing requirements for small charitable organizations conducting specific gaming events and for cinematographers and their operators
- reviewing the existing process for film classification

- Modify the licence fee structure to reflect current costs.
- Strengthen processes to support future development of a risk-based model for delivery of alcohol, gaming, and amusement inspection, monitoring, and compliance services.

4. Employment Standards and Labour Services

- Maintain existing service response times for conciliation requests as required under the Trade Union Act and continue to offer preventative mediation programs, in support of the heavy collective bargaining agenda in both the public and private sectors anticipated for 2002-03.
- Develop a process for legislative review of the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code.
- Ensure the provision of competent service to all eligible injured workers through implementation of applicable recommendations of the Auditor General and the Review Committee, established by Section (161) of the Workers' Compensation Act.

5. Pension and Financial Services Regulation

- Develop insurance legislation that is harmonized within the Atlantic region, bring forward such legislation for approval in principle and for legislative drafting, and initiate development of regulations supporting that legislation.
- Receive, review, and respond to proposed amendments to the Credit Union Act, prepared in accordance with a scheduled review in conjunction with the credit union system, and initiate development of appropriate recommendations for legislative amendment.
- Develop regulations for introduction of enhanced educational qualifications for life insurance agents in Nova Scotia in coordination with the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators and Canadian Insurance Services Regulatory Organization and implement corresponding changes in the licensing regime.

- Develop amendments to regulations governing general insurance agents in Nova Scotia in accordance with consultations conducted and implement corresponding changes in the licensing regime.
- Provide representation and negotiation of Nova Scotia's interests in the development of model pension law.

Energy

Mission:

An energy industry balancing economic growth, social goals, and respect for the environment for generations of today and tomorrow is essential for Nova Scotia to achieve its vision of becoming one of the best places in the world to live and to work.

Strategic Goals

- To create a world-class energy sector that achieves sustainable economic development in balance with high social and environmental standards.
- To optimize the financial, economic and social benefits in the province's rapidly expanding offshore energy sector.
- To improve the province's environment and enhance the quality of life of Nova Scotians.

Note:

The Department of Energy will be created during the fiscal year 2002-03. Components of the new department will include the Petroleum Directorate and the Energy Utilization Section from the Department of Natural Resources.

Core Business Areas

1. Develop policy, legislation, and regulations

The department is directly responsible for developing and recommending government policy, legislation, and regulations in a number of areas, including offshore oil and gas exploration and development activities, gas distribution, the management of onshore petroleum rights and the royalties paid by oil and gas producers, the achievement of local benefits, the province's activities related to climate change, and the efficient use of all energy resources.

2. Administer contracts, agreements, legislation, and regulations

The department administers a wide variety of provincial policies and agreements in various forms, such as offshore strategic energy agreements, royalty agreements with producers, national and international agreements related to climate change, benefits agreements signed pursuant to provincial legislation, and the awarding of onshore petroleum and storage rights.

3. Liaise with other government departments, other levels of government, the private sector, and the citizens of Nova Scotia

In order to effectively carry out its mandate, the department maintains business relationships with other agencies and departments in Nova Scotia, and other provinces, municipalities, the federal government, US federal and state agencies, energy companies throughout the world, industry and trade organizations, and individual citizens of the province.

4. Promote economic activity and benefits

The exploration for, as well as development and use of energy are crucial to the economies of all modern societies. The department conducts its promotional activities in a manner that helps to maximize the economic benefits flowing to Nova Scotians from such development and use. This is done in balance with high social and environmental standards.

5. Help to inform and educate Nova Scotians

The Energy Department works to ensure that Nova Scotians are informed on energy issues that affect them and enable them to make informed energy decisions. The department also has an important role to play in helping educate Nova Scotians on energy opportunities and options.

6. Represent the province in regulatory proceedings

The key regulators of the energy industry are either at arm's length to the provincial government or report to other levels of government. The Energy Department appears before such regulators on behalf of the province in order to ensure that the interests of Nova Scotians are taken into account when regulatory decisions are being made.

Priorities

1. Develop policy, legislation, and regulations

- Adopt the policy that offshore pipeline routing will be restricted to a limited number of corridors and that all pipelines carrying Nova Scotia gas or liquids from the offshore will land in Nova Scotia.

- Continue discussions between the province, Natural Resources Canada, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB), and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) relative to CAPP's Regulatory Issues Matrix. This effort will focus on designing improvements to processes and realizing outcomes.
- Work with the federal government and the CNSOPB to review the effectiveness of the regulatory requirements in the offshore area. Work to reach agreement between the levels of government on the implementation of recommended changes.
- Prepare a comprehensive review of benefits-related information presently required to be submitted to regulators, the federal government, and the province. Identify clear reporting objectives, gaps, overlap, and unnecessary duplication. Using the results of this assessment, streamline and refocus the reporting of such information to governments and the public.
- Prepare revisions to the Gas Distribution Act and regulations to implement the gas distribution policy changes announced in the Energy Strategy.
- Prepare revisions to the Pipelines Regulations.
- Adopt as policy that each project development with significant quantities of natural gas liquids must be planned in such a manner that it contributes to the potential development of a petrochemical industry in Nova Scotia.
- Create an electricity marketplace governance committee (EMGC), accountable to the Minister of Energy, to facilitate the consultation, development, structure, and implementation of rules for introducing electricity competition.
- Work with local gas distributors to develop a series of standard practices for dealing with issues such as water crossings, sulphide-bearing materials (acid rock), vegetation clearance and disposal, protection of archaeological resources, etc.
- Continue to work with the federal government and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to develop new legislation and regulations on offshore health and safety.

- Prepare a new Energy Act, which will consolidate sections from several existing pieces of legislation (e.g., the Nova Scotia Power Privatization Act, the Gas Distribution Act, the Public Utilities Act) into one act. This will clarify and simplify the legislation applicable to energy in Nova Scotia.

2. Administer contracts, agreements, legislation, and regulations

- Implement the new Underground Hydrocarbons Storage Act in order to provide a clearer regulatory approval process for the development of underground gas storage in Nova Scotia.
- Reach offshore strategic energy agreements (OSEAs) with the developers of each offshore project. Some of the issues that will be addressed include the project developer's assessment of the underlying economics of the project, including assumptions about supply capabilities and energy supply and demand in the markets to be served; the project developer's plan to achieve Nova Scotia's economic objectives including those outlined in the benefits plan to be filed to the CNSOPB; the project developer's plan to increase Nova Scotia's capacity and capabilities for gaining value from the offshore; measurement of Nova Scotia's overall economic gains from the project; and the province's rights and requirements with respect to investment in pipeline infrastructure.
- Conduct an audit of royalty payments by the Sable Offshore Energy Project.
- Continue to coordinate the province's role with respect to the regulation of upstream oil and gas exploration activity.

3. Liaise with other government departments, other levels of government, the private sector, and the citizens of Nova Scotia.

- Work with groups and processes already established to improve knowledge and understanding of commercially important and environmentally sensitive ocean and coastline areas (Eastern Scotian Shelf Integrated Management process and CNSOPB's Fisheries and Environment Advisory Committee).
- Work with the fishing industry, the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Atlantic Canada Petroleum Institute (ACPI) to bring research initiatives to bear on potential conflicts that might arise from multiple uses of environmentally important areas.
- Work within the national climate change process to ensure that Nova Scotia's interests with respect to coal-fired thermal electricity generation are taken into account.
- Continue to participate in the national climate change process and contribute to the National Implementation Strategy (NIS).
- Continue to negotiate with federal and other provincial governments to ensure that impacts of national actions with respect to climate change are shared fairly by all jurisdictions.
- Maintain existing partnerships, and develop new partnerships, particularly in the context of existing federal, provincial, and municipal policies and programs, to encourage energy efficiency in the transportation sector.
- Work with Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) and Nova Scotian universities to monitor the existing technology and new developments in clean coal technology and opportunities for research and development in Nova Scotia.
- Work with the federal government, the CNSOPB, and industry to update the estimate of Nova Scotia's resource potential.

4. Promote economic activity and benefits

- Promote the onshore resource potential through increased participation at oil and gas trade shows, presentations at technical conferences, and meetings with petroleum industry clients.

- Promote local supplier and support-industry development and business opportunities.
- Work with other government departments and agencies and the private sector to identify, assess, and promote the development of additional fabrication and supply capacity and new energy based project development.
- Promote opportunities for petro-chemical development in Nova Scotia.
- Facilitate opportunities for Nova Scotia's business-sector students to develop competency through energy-sector work experience.

5. Help to inform and educate Nova Scotians

- Work with industry to develop and provide information for the public on the use and benefits of natural gas.
- Support the creation of public education programs on global climate change.
- Encourage the oil and gas sector and the Nova Scotia Community College to work together in establishing targeted training programs to address company-specific development needs.
- Support industry efforts to expand experience building at all levels, from apprentices to professionals to management.
- Coordinate (with the Department of Education) industry's identification of skills gaps and the partnership opportunities with the federal government.
- Continue to support the apprenticeship training model through active industry participation in program development, training delivery, and apprentice registrations/retention.
- Encourage energy efficiency in existing housing by supporting residential energy audits, expanded web-based energy information, publications, and advice to consumers.
- Provide public awareness and education on the importance of energy conservation and emission reductions in the transportation sector.
- Implement information programs to promote efficient use of renewable energy technologies.

6. Represent the province in regulatory proceedings

- Pursue opportunities to maximize the economic value of offshore resources by full participation in the regulatory approval process. Specifically, participate in the regulatory approval processes for the proposed Deep Panuke gas development and the expansion of the Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline.
- Be an active intervenor to advance Nova Scotia's interests at all relevant National Energy Board and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission hearings on facilities, tariffs, and toll applications.
- Participate as an active intervenor in Utility and Review Board (UARB) hearings regarding the issuance of distribution franchises, the development of market rules, and the setting of tolls and tariffs.
- Be an active intervener in the UARB review of NSPI's rate application.

Finance

Mission:

To establish a fiscal climate conducive to economic growth and to provide central agency support and policy direction for effective management of the province's finances.

Strategic Goals

- To enhance financial accountability in the management and control of the province's finances.
- To enhance Nova Scotia's long-term fiscal position, provide for fair and efficient taxation, and promote economic growth in a strategic way that balances the social responsibilities of government and debt reduction.
- To provide a core set of high-quality corporate services and infrastructure that supports the efficient and effective management of the province's public resources, including: government accounting, payroll, pensions, fiscal planning, treasury, statistics, and internal audit.
- To achieve effective money management that maximizes return on investments and minimizes debt-servicing costs, within acceptable risk tolerances.
- To foster an environment that values its clients and its employees.

Core Business Areas

1. Financial Accountability

- Provides quality control for the accounting of government financial transactions.
- Prepares quarterly and annual reports that show the fiscal, economic, and financial position of the province.
- Liaises with the Auditor General in conducting the external audit of the province's finances, conducts internal audits, and reviews government programs.
- Jointly with Treasury and Policy Board, promotes effective financial accountability through expenditure monitoring and financial reporting; participates in the planning and review of the budget process and preparation of the budget documents.

2. Investments, Pensions, and Debt Management

- Manages provincial investments, trust funds, pension funds, liability obligations and treasury operations.

- Administers the Teachers' Pension Plan, the Public Service Superannuation Plan, the MLAs' Pension Plan, the pension plans and insurance programs of the former Sydney Steel Corporation, and the province's Public Service Award Program.

3. Fiscal Planning and Policy Development

- Provides strong representation and negotiation of Nova Scotia's interests on a wide variety of federal-provincial, regional, and interdepartmental committees and task groups reviewing such issues as the major federal-provincial fiscal and taxation arrangements, statistics, and economic policies.
- Prepares four-year fiscal plans as the basis for moving to fiscal sustainability.
- Researches and develops a comprehensive, cohesive tax regime that is sensitive to the fiscal, social, and economic priorities of government.
- Enhances accountability and governance structures as they relate to public policy and administration of financial resources.

4. Corporate Services

- Provides corporate services in government accounting, payroll, pensions, statistics, and internal audit.

Priorities

1. Financial Accountability

- Deliver a balanced budget in fiscal 2002–03 and produce a four-year fiscal plan that meets government's objective to put Nova Scotia's finances in order.
- Continue enhancement of accountability and governance structures as they relate to public policy and administration of financial resources through the government's financial management policies and procedures.
- Continue to improve overall fiscal management by producing relevant and timely financial reports.
- Monitor government's exposure to financial risk on such items as foreign exchange and unforeseen events.
- Implement a common enterprise resource management system in the broader public sector, including district health authorities, school boards, and municipalities.

- Continue to monitor and report on the fiscal plan in a timely manner, in conjunction with Treasury and Policy Board.

2. Investments, Pensions, and Debt Management

- Finalize documentation of the guarantee review process and develop policies for public capital risk allocation methodology.
- Integrate treasury management systems and capital market information systems and accounting systems to enhance the overall control, monitoring, and performance of the Liability Management and Investment Divisions.
- Effectively manage the assets of the Teachers' Pension Plan and Public Service Superannuation Plan and the pension plans and insurance programs of the former Sydney Steel Corporation.

3. Fiscal Planning and Policy Development

- Ongoing evaluation of provincial income tax credits, rebates, and tax expenditures.
- Prepare analysis and recommendations on tax policy priorities.
- Provide comprehensive research and analysis to support Nova Scotia's interests in fiscal arrangement negotiations with other governments, including the renewal of the Equalization Program, additional health care funding, and HST revenue allocation.
- Provide support to provincial-territorial finance ministers' deliberations as Nova Scotia assumes the key responsibilities associated with chairing this committee from August 2002 to August 2003.
- Monitor and develop economic forecast information and analysis and enhance the economic models to support the accurate and timely development of forecasts of Nova Scotia's economic performance.
- Implement recommendations of the action plan of the Statistical Needs and Capacity Survey of Nova Scotia.
- Develop a surplus management and debt policy to achieve government's objective of fiscal sustainability.

4. Corporate Services

- Provide improved government access to a wider range and detail of social and economic statistics to support evidence-based management and policy development.

- Continue to provide leadership and coordination to the implementation of standard accounting software and systems for the provincial public sector.
- Provide guidance and support to departments and agencies on significant accounting and financial issues.
- Provide corporate internal audit services for the provincial government.
- Deliver pension services to plan members and beneficiaries, effectively and efficiently.
- Provide payroll and government accounting services for the provincial government.

5. Internal Management

The development of the department's human and technical resources is central to its ability to deliver the core business functions. The following priorities are aimed at achieving this goal:

- Contribute to the quality and professionalism of human resource management in the department.
- Continue to develop a productive and skilled work force in a healthy and safe work environment.
- Acquire and develop technologies to improve productivity and output quality.
- Continue to improve staff training opportunities to provide the skills necessary to achieve the department's strategic goals.

Health

Mission:

Through leadership and collaboration, to promote, maintain, and improve the health of Nova Scotians and ensure an appropriate and affordable health care system.

Strategic Goals

After an extensive internal and external consultation and analysis process, the Department of Health has set the following strategic directions for itself and for the provincially funded health system in 2002-03 and beyond:

- Design and implement a plan for continuing care that addresses integration, sustainability, and accountability.
- Develop and implement a broad-based health human resource strategy.
- Develop and implement a strategy to ensure the accountable provision of quality and integrated health services by district health authorities (DHAs).
- Design and implement a primary health care system that meets the needs of Nova Scotians.
- Implement a management strategy to address capital issues as related to information, equipment, and facilities.
- Develop policies and standards that promote health and prevent illness based on evidence, best practice, and intersectoral collaboration.
- Develop and implement a plan for the care of mentally ill adults, youth, and children.
- Identify strategies that facilitate improved disease management across the continuum of health care and service.

Core Business Areas

1. Population Health and Primary Health Care

Population health refers to the health of a population as measured by health status indicators and as influenced by social, economic and physical environments, personal health practices, individual capacity and coping skills, human biology, early childhood development, health services, culture, and gender. The goals of a population health approach are to maintain and improve the health status of the entire population and to reduce inequities in health status between population groups.

Primary health care is the first point of contact individuals have with the health care system and the first element of a continuing care process. Primary health care includes prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of common illness or injury, support for emotional and mental health, ongoing management of chronic conditions, advice on self-care, ensuring healthy environments and communities, and coordination for access to other services and providers.

Population Health and Primary Health Care provides leadership, direction, and support to the following services:

- Addiction Services includes withdrawal management, community-based programs (outpatients and structure treatment), prevention and community education, and problem gambling (specialized services including prevention and education).
- Tobacco Control works in partnership with many other groups to implement a comprehensive tobacco strategy for Nova Scotia. Elements include taxation, legislation, treatment/cessation programs, community-based programming, youth smoking prevention initiatives, media awareness, and evaluation.
- Public Health Services works in partnership with communities, families, and individuals to prevent illness, protect and promote health, and achieve well-being.
- Primary Health Care provides policy and planning support to redesigning a community-based primary health care system for Nova Scotia. Changes might include, for example, increasing the number of community-based primary health care organizations, more interdisciplinary teams, better linkages to other parts of the health care system, and increased emphasis on health promotion.

2. Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services are funded by the Department of Health and delivered by nine district health authorities (DHAs) and the Izaak Walton Killam Hospital (IWK). They administer a network of 50 community-based clinics, inpatient beds, day treatment centres, clubhouse psychosocial rehabilitation programs, and adult and youth drop-in centres. The services are part of a continuum of care at the community level. All of these services are consumer and family focused.

Each of the DHAs and the IWK offer acute psychiatric care. Specialized services, including forensic, children and youth, psychogeriatric, and psychosocial, are both hospital and community based. Mental Health Services also encompasses early intervention programs for children and youth deemed at risk, intersectoral initiatives for children and youth, specialized long-term rehabilitation programs, programs for sex offenders, and consultation services.

3. Acute and Tertiary Care

Acute or hospital care comprises secondary and tertiary care services delivered by the nine DHAs and the two provincial health care centres (PHCCs). Acute Care is delivered in 37 facilities, which are governed and managed by the DHAs. Funding is provided by the Department of Health in accordance with the Canada Health Act and the Health Services and Insurance Act.

Each district has community and district facilities with services that vary according to the type and level of emergency care provided, the hours of operation and access to ambulatory care provided, and the type and level of service provided to their inpatient populations. Inpatient services range from general practitioner services at the community facility level through to varied specialist services at the district level.

The Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre (QEII) and the IWK in Halifax are the two PHCCs. These centres provide specialized services in addition to services available in the community and district facilities. The PHCCs also provide the highest level of emergency services.

4. Insured Health Programs

In addition to hospital services, the Department of Health also funds medical or physician services for Nova Scotians under the terms of the Canada Health Act and the Health Services and Insurance Act. Under the legislation, insured physician services are those services that a qualified and licensed physician deems are medically necessary in order to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, or otherwise alter a disease pattern.

Other publicly funded health programs include seniors' and other pharmacare programs, a children's dental program, and other services for specific populations such as optometry, prosthetics, and dental surgery.

5. Emergency Health Services

Emergency Health Services (EHS) is responsible for the continual development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of pre-hospital emergency health services for the province. Since 1995, the ambulance system has undergone a transformation from primarily a transportation system to a pre-hospital medical system with a province-wide fleet of well equipped ambulances. The ambulances are staffed by registered paramedics who perform life-saving procedures and can administer a wide range of medications.

The main components of EHS are a communications centre, a ground ambulance service, an air medical transport program (EHS LifeFlight), a provincial trauma program, and the Atlantic Health Training and Simulation Centre. All system components are monitored by physicians specially trained in emergency care.

6. Continuing Care Services

Continuing Care is a system of delivering an integrated continuum of health and social services to support the independence and well-being of individuals with an identified need. Services include nursing homes, homes for the aged, residential care facilities, small option homes, community residences, adult protection, home oxygen, and acute and chronic home care services. In most cases, the need for care and support is long term; however, short-term needs are also met through the home care program. The Department of Health is primarily responsible for services to seniors, but some younger adults are also served through our nursing homes, home care services, and adult protection programs.

The Continuing Care Program includes administrative functions, including planning, budgeting, human resource, and support activities; assessment/coordination services, including intake, assessment, service planning, resource authorization, and ongoing case management functions; and care services such as nursing care, personal care, home support, rehabilitation, respiratory therapy services, palliative care, and respite.

7. Provincial and Other Health Programs

The Department of Health funds a number of arm's-length agencies that plan and coordinate service delivery and standards setting to ensure consistency and quality of care and service delivery. Agencies such as Cancer Care Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Trauma Program, Diabetes Care Nova Scotia, and the Reproductive Care Program bring together experts in care provision to establish standards based on best practice, research evidence, and stakeholder input. Through these agencies, strong networks of professionals participate in the rapid transmission and uptake of new knowledge and standards. Data are collected to enable monitoring of compliance with standards and outcomes of service delivery.

In keeping with its mission, the department also provides grants and funding to a variety of agencies and organizations across the province to provide advocacy and specific health-related services to targeted populations.

Priorities

1. Population Health and Primary Health Care

- Develop and implement a community-based primary health care system for Nova Scotia though a broad-based advisory committee and task teams working on such things as provider roles, funding, linkages, governance, etc.
- Continue funding and supporting the four primary care demonstration sites in Springhill, Pictou, Caledonia, and north end Halifax.
- Determine the effectiveness and efficiency of a primary health care model for rural and remote communities.
- Recruit nurse practitioners to work in primary health care settings in Nova Scotia.
- Reduce smoking rates in Nova Scotia and the burden of illness from tobacco-related causes, through tobacco pricing and taxation, smoke-free policies and legislation, treatment and smoking cessation programs, community-based programming, youth smoking prevention approaches, media and public awareness, monitoring, and evaluation.

- Develop and implement an intersectoral approach to address the service gaps in addiction services for women and youth.
- Develop and implement a coordinated, realistic, and comprehensive strategy for blood borne pathogens (HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C), which addresses the needs of clients from prevention to palliative care.
- Develop a chronic disease prevention strategy that integrates the Nova Scotia Tobacco Strategy and related national initiatives with evolving strategies such as the Physical Activity in Children and Youth strategy.

2. Mental Health Services

- Develop a plan, program standards, and an evaluation framework for mental health services across the life span.
- Develop a framework for delivering blended mental health services for children and youth in residential treatment settings.
- Develop a strategy for an intersectoral response to the changes in the federal Youth Justice (Young Offenders) Act.

3. Acute and Tertiary Care

- Develop a funding methodology for DHAs that ensures equity and consistency based on intensity of the service delivered and on the burden of illness in the population served.
- Study and strengthen the current DHA governance and service delivery structure to ensure its efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability for the future.
- Establish a review of clinical pharmacy practices to identify and eliminate any unnecessary duplication and improve drug utilization practices.
- Clarify and further develop the DHA and community health board (CHB) roles and functions to better reflect those anticipated in the Health Authorities Act.
- Develop a policy framework and consistent provincial approach to revenue generation by DHAs in connection with their provision of non-insured services.
- Continue to expand the province's capacity for renal dialysis to cope with the growing demand for this critical service.

- Improve access to orthopedic services in northen Nova Scotia through support for an expanded orthopedic program at the Pictou County DHA.
- Develop and implement a process for facility and equipment infrastructure management across the health system.
- Continue implementation of the Hospital Information Systems (HIS) project to satisfy the need for timely and relevant clinical and management information for evidence-based decision making.
- Continue support of Health Infostructure Atlantic (HIA) in its development of information systems to support expanded tele-radiology functions.
- Increase DHA operational funding by 10 per cent and allocate it across the DHAs on the basis of current needs and demonstrated efficiencies.
- Ensure accountability of DHAs in terms of service quality, resource utilization management, standards development, monitoring processes, financial accountability, and outcomes achievement.

4. Insured Health Programs

- Complete and implement a comprehensive physician resource plan for Nova Scotia.
- Implement strategies aimed at recruiting and retaining health professionals and, where possible, "repatriating" Nova Scotian health professionals from other provinces, other countries, and other careers.
- Maximize efficiency and effectiveness of health human resources planning among the four Atlantic provinces.
- Study alternative physician payment models, examining the strengths and weaknesses of each in terms of recruitment, retention, payment basis, scheduling, and other relevant factors.
- Continue implementation of an Academic Detailing Service (ADS) aimed at improving physician prescribing practices, drug utilization management, and clinical effectiveness.
- Implement a comprehensive provincial nursing strategy.

5. Emergency Health Services

- Continue the health services planning process by initiating Phase 3 planning for primary care, ambulatory care, and emergency services.

6. Continuing Care Services

- Implement Single Entry Access (SEA) to home care, long-term care, and adult protection services across Nova Scotia.
- Continue support of Health Infostructure Atlantic (HIA) in its development of information systems to support SEA and case management functions.
- Apply a new planning methodology for determining the optimum size, scope, contribution, and distribution of continuing care services across Nova Scotia.
- Improve services and supports for residential behaviour issues.
- Predict, manage, and ensure sustainability of home care service growth.
- Develop and implement a plan for infrastructure assessment, repair, and management in long-term care facilities across Nova Scotia.
- Develop an appropriate, consistent, and equitable funding formula for the residential long-term care sector.
- Devolve the departmentally administered home care programs to the governance and administration of the DHAs.
- Integrate the Department of Health's long-term care sector with the DHAs through the establishment of affiliation agreements.

7. Provincial and Other Health Programs

- Develop and implement a broad-based and comprehensive approach to disaster planning, which encompasses bioterrorism, pandemic flu, and surveillance and alert strategies.
- Develop an enhanced home visiting component to the existing Early Childhood Development project in co-operation with the Department of Community Services and with funding support from the federal government.

- Reorient the Improving Cardiovascular Outcomes in Nova Scotia Project (ICONS) to integrate its functions as a component of a sustainable and comprehensive provincial cardiac program. ICONS is a wide-ranging five-year disease management research project, which has been funded by a major pharmaceutical company and administered by the QEII Hospital. It has achieved positive results in improving the consistency and quality of cardiovascular care in Nova Scotia hospitals and in improving outcomes for certain groups of patients.
- Develop and implement a framework for provincial health programs that promotes the disease management principle of coordinating resources for patients with chronic conditions across the health care system and the life cycle of illness.

Justice

Mission:

The Department of Justice is committed to the fair and effective administration of justice and to excellence in service to the people of Nova Scotia.

Strategic Goals

- Improve public safety and security.
- Reduce the harmful impact of crime on victims.
- Improve access to justice.
- Promote the lawful administration of public affairs.

Core Business Areas

1. Oversight, governance, and advice to police and private security services

The department is responsible for ensuring that policing services are delivered effectively by providing advisory services to municipal police services and by managing contracts with the RCMP and First Nations Policing; providing regular audits/inspections of municipal police agencies; delivering the federal firearms program; licensing companies and individuals engaged in the private security industry; and working with communities to develop and implement crime prevention programs.

2. Provision of assistance to victims of crime

The department works with justice partners and the community to develop and implement policies and programs for victims of crime that address their needs. The department provides direct services to victims through four core programs: the Regional Victims' Services Program, the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program, the Victim Impact Statement Program, and the Child Victim Witness Program.

3. Principled dispute resolution mechanisms

The department is responsible for administration of the following courts: Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, Supreme Court (Family Division), Provincial Court, Family Court, Small Claims Court, Summary Proceedings Court; for the management of court offices and registries (including probate and bankruptcy); for the management of programs in support of the Family Division, including conciliation, mediation, parent education, and supervised access; for security and transportation of prisoners to and from court; for coordination of the Justices of the Peace program; for management of the Maintenance Enforcement Program; and for management of the Restorative Justice Program.

4. Correctional services

The department is responsible for the administration and operation of five adult correctional institutions, two young offender facilities, and 16 community corrections offices, which provide supervision of those serving sentences in the community.

5. Legal services to government

The department provides legal advice and representation to all government departments and agencies.

6. Support to partners in the administration of justice

The Nova Scotia Legal Aid Commission delivers legal representation to qualified applicants, with priority for matters involving the liberty and civil rights of individual clients and for matters involving the integrity and protections of an individual's family.

The Office of the Medical Examiner conducts investigations into all deaths due to violence, undue means, culpable negligence, and sudden unexplained deaths and provides written documentation including cause and manner of death.

The Office of the Public Trustee provides trustee services for incompetent adults/infants and missing persons.

Priorities

1. Oversight, governance, and advice to police and private security services

- In consultation with key public services, lead an evaluation of the province's current capacity to respond to and manage threats to public safety, identify deficiencies, and develop and coordinate a plan to effectively address deficiencies.
- Explore legislative means to enhance public safety and security measures, including the examination of existing legislation.

2. Provision of assistance to victims of crime

- Implement the government response to the Russell Report on the Framework for Action Against Family Violence: proclamation of domestic violence legislation; development and implementation of protocols for responding to high-risk cases; development and delivery of training modules for all justice workers; establishment of domestic violence victim assistance coordinator positions to work with police agencies to provide victim assistance and support; and development of a strategy to facilitate the use of risk assessment methods by criminal justice partners in cases of spousal/intimate partner violence.
- Implement, in partnership with Public Prosecution Service, an action plan to improve the experience of child victims in the criminal justice system.

3. Principled dispute resolution mechanisms

- Improve access to family justice services by creating tools and providing information to self-represented litigants and by enhancing processes to reduce delays in accessing services.
- Address the requirement to provide safe, secure, and functional courthouse facilities through the construction of a new courthouse in Port Hawkesbury and renovations to various courts throughout the province.
- Implement new federal legislation that will amend the Criminal Code to reduce inefficiencies in the criminal justice system by providing for the use and filing of electronic documents with courts and by eliminating unnecessary court appearances by accused persons, victims, and witnesses.

4. Correctional services

- Enhance the network of safe, secure correctional facilities through the construction of a new institution in Yarmouth.
- Implement a plan to provide programs and services required to comply with the federal Youth Criminal Justice Act, including a comprehensive training program for all justice workers and interagency protocols to coordinate services for youth in conflict with the law.

5. Legal services to government

- Continue to expand capacity to do government's legal work.
- Monitor and ensure that legal services engaged through the private sector are retained in accordance with the Acquisition of Private Legal Services Policy and the Employment Equity for Crown Law Agents Policy.

6. Support to partners in the administration of justice

- In partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College, establish a justice learning centre to better respond to the training and development requirements associated with new justice legislation and programs.
- Enhance accountability mechanisms in respect of entities for which the Minister of Justice is accountable to the House of Assembly.

- Support the federal government in their plan to implement a national sex offender registry
- Redevelop the Justice Oriented Information System to meet the requirements and objectives of new federal youth legislation and to facilitate data exchange among justice stakeholders.

Natural Resources

Mission:

To build a better future for Nova Scotians through responsible natural resources management.

Strategic Goals

Five broad goals have been identified for the department:

- To achieve sound natural resources stewardship.
- To conserve the diversity of Nova Scotia's natural environment.
- To support Nova Scotia's economy through the sustainable development of natural resources.
- To improve the quality of life in Nova Scotia.
- To manage the department's financial, physical, human, and information resources effectively and efficiently.

Core Business Areas

1. Natural Resources Management and Use

This includes the department's responsibilities related to the development, management, conservation, use, and protection of forest, mineral, parks, and wildlife resources. Forestry-related responsibilities include forest management planning and research, developing and implementing strategies to ensure sustainable forests, and contributing to investments made in silviculture. Protection-related responsibilities include the development and delivery of programs designed to protect Nova Scotia's forests from fire, insects, and disease. Minerals responsibilities include the implementation of policies and programs dealing with exploration, development, management, and utilization of mineral resources. Parks responsibilities include the planning, design, development, and operation of over 120 camping and day-use parks. Wildlife responsibilities include research, development, and delivery of programs, policies, and legislation for the management and conservation of the province's wildlife resources and their habitats, including endangered species initiatives.

2. Crown Lands Administration

This includes the department's activities related to the administration of most of the province's Crown lands. Crown Lands Administration encompasses the acquisition, leasing, and disposal of interests in Crown lands, coordination of government surveying requirements, maintaining boundary lines on Crown land, and maintaining provincial Crown lands records and the Crown lands GIS cadastral database. Nova Scotia's land mass is approximately 4.9 million hectares (12 million acres), of which 1.4 million hectares (3.5 million acres) are administered and controlled by the Department of Natural Resources as provincial Crown lands. The department also administers inland submerged lands and submerged lands along the province's 9000 km (5600 miles) of coastline.

3. Infrastructure and Support Services

Infrastructure responsibilities include the maintenance and replacement of a fleet of approximately 700 highway and other specialized vehicles. The department also operates an Integrated Mobile Radio System (IMRS), which provides continuous communications for various government departments, agencies, and other users. Support services include human resources, information technology, financial, communications, legal, business planning, policy development and coordination, research, asset management, risk management, records management, cartography, website development and support, information management, and other administrative functions.

Priorities

1. Natural Resources Management and Use

- Continue to implement the Forest Strategy, which consists of nine major policy, program, and regulatory elements, directed to achieving sustainable forestry and forest use in the province. New Wildlife Habitat and Watercourses Protection Regulations have been passed, and their initial implementation will be a priority over the next year. Other key elements, such as the code of forest practice and state of forest reporting, are being developed for implementation over the next two years. Revisions to the Forest Sustainability Regulations must also be implemented.
- Provide support for a viable and sustainable mineral industry in the province. The department will work to provide for a continuing coal industry in Cape Breton and to ensure that provincial requirements for remediation and reclamation of Cape Breton Development Corp. (CBDC) lands disturbed by coal mining are properly planned and initiated. The department will implement multi-disciplinary geoscience programs and undertake promotion of the province's mineral resources to increase the level of exploration, as well as work co-operatively with industry, other departments, and community development groups to encourage appropriate development opportunities.

- Continue Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Planning on Crown Lands. DNR is using an IRM process for Crown lands to take into account the relationships between the various resource uses and effects of management practices of one resource upon others. Plans for the department for 2002-03 include the continued implementation of the IRM planning process on Crown lands. As part of this process, the preparation of Long Range Management Plans (LRMP) for several of the province's 38 ecodistricts will begin. A LRMP will eventually be prepared for each ecodistrict.
- Provide an effective parks and recreation program. The department supports the planning, design, development, and operation of more than 120 camping and day-use parks, in addition to providing trails and other outdoor recreational opportunities on Crown land. The department plans to designate one natural environment provincial park under the Parks Act in 2002-03.
- Conserve wildlife and wildlife habitat. The promotion and implementation of the principles and ethics of conservation and sustainable use of wildlife populations, habitats, and ecosystems in Nova Scotia is a priority. The department will continue programs, policies, and legislation for the implementation of the National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk and the Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act.
- Utilize departmental information and expertise to promote sound management of the province's natural resources to ensure their optimum use for the benefit of Nova Scotians. This information will contribute to growth in the provincial economy and an improvement in public safety. Educational material will be provided to youth, educators, resource sector clients, the media, and the general public on sustainable and responsible resource management and use practices.

- Provide forest protection services. The department is responsible for managing wildfires in most areas of the province. DNR carries out a range of activities from fire prevention and fire detection to, when necessary, fire suppression. DNR also provides integrated pest management services. Activities to be carried out include pest detection surveys, pest identification, and advice to clients. The department will work with partners to detect new pests as early as possible, identify population changes, and minimize losses due to pests.

2. Crown Lands Administration

- Provide an up to date and responsive legislative framework. Reviews of the Beaches Act and the Trails Act are expected to lead to changes that will facilitate trail development by providing a streamlined process for formal registration of community-based trail developments and ensure protection of Nova Scotia's beaches.
- Improve access to land information. A priority for 2002-03 is the continued improvement in the distribution of land information, including the expanded use of the Internet, and the integration of information from various geographic information system databases within the department.
- Deliver Crown lands administrative services. The department carries out numerous activities related to the acquisition, disposal, and leasing of Crown lands, pursuant to a number of statutes. Boundary lines are also established and maintained. To maintain information on government land holdings, the department operates the provincial Crown Lands Records Centre.

3. Infrastructure and Support Services

- Replacing the helicopter fleet is a priority. The existing helicopters are rapidly reaching the end of their useful lives, and their replacement is the most cost-effective option. Helicopters are essential for responsibilities such as protecting forests against fires.

- Transfer of the administration and control of the infrastructure, maintenance, and engineering contracts associated with the Integrated Mobile Radio System to the Trunked Mobile Radio office, which is the responsibility of Transportation and Public Works, is planned.
- Central support services include many internal support functions. Each of these particular groups has a number of internally focused priorities that support the ongoing operation of the department in an efficient and effective manner. Services provided include human resources, financial, information technology, legal, planning, information management, and administrative services.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Mission:

To provide Nova Scotians with seamless, easy access to numerous government services in a cost-effective manner while maintaining the interests of the public and municipalities.

Strategic Goals

- Provide streamlined access to quality, client-centred government services that are second to none.
- Lead government's corporate strategy for e-government services as well as alternative program delivery.
- Emerge as an employer of choice, known for developing staff and providing a motivating work environment.
- Foster the development of efficient, effective, and financially healthy municipal governments.
- Advance the public interest by improving the programs we administer.
- Develop a culture of continuous improvement in the organizational and functional responsibilities of the department.

Core Business Areas

1. Program Management

This includes providing strategic direction for the department's program development, enforcement, public awareness and the related legislation, regulations, and policies necessary for each program.

Currently, major program areas and activities of this core business include the Provincial Tax Commission, the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Registry of Joint Stock Companies, Residential Tenancies, consumer and business policy, driver and vehicle safety, corporate development, audit and enforcement, and collections for this department and other government clients.

2. Service Delivery

Programs are those that involve direct interaction with customers on behalf of government. They include the departmental call centre and Access Nova Scotia and Registry of Motor Vehicle offices across the province, along with managing the e-service channel.

Major programs delivered by this core business include the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Residential Tenancies, Debtor Assistance, and the Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

3. Registry and Information Management Services

These are activities related to registering and processing public records related to land, businesses, and individuals. They include the geographic information holdings of the province and the application and ownership of the department's major databases.

This business area operates a number of major registries including the Registry of Deeds, the Personal Property Registry, Vital Statistics, the Registry of Joint Stock Companies, and the Nova Scotia Business Registry. It leads the province's strategy for geographic information management, including developing, maintaining, and distributing Nova Scotia's primary geographic information. Other major back-office activities include processing for a number of programs offered by the department, such as fuel, tobacco, and vehicle dealer registrations, as well as support to programs offered by other departments, including Wildlife Act licensing programs on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources and registrations on behalf of the Workers' Compensation Board.

4. Municipal Relations

This area provides planning and advisory services to the government related to municipal matters and on behalf of the government to municipalities. This area also operates many of the grant and other financial support programs offered to municipalities.

Programs include advice and support to municipalities in the areas of administration and finance, land-use planning, and the National Building Code. The department also administers programs such as the Canada–Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program, the Community Accessibility program, and the Community Transportation Assistance Program.

5. Alternative Program Delivery

This area involves the development of partnerships to deliver services on behalf of other government departments and to manage arrangements with non-government agencies to deliver services on behalf of government.

It currently includes Assessment Services, which is being studied as a service that can be delivered outside the government. Assessment Services delivers an annual assessment roll to each of the 55 municipalities in compliance with the Assessment Act. The assessment roll is used by municipalities to generate revenue for services delivered by them, and uniform assessment is used to calculate municipal contributions towards education, corrections, and the distribution of provincial grants to municipalities. Legislation also requires that assessment notices be delivered annually to each property owner and that an assessment appeal mechanism be in place.

Priorities

1. Program Management

The following priorities are intended to increase revenues to the department and government and to improve the fairness, effectiveness, and efficiency of the programs offered by the department.

- Increase the number of Economic Development portfolios within the umbrella of the SNSMR debt collection unit and develop initiatives to attract the debt portfolios of other departments to SNSMR.
- Reduce the number of deaths and injuries as a result of motor vehicle operation by
  - strengthening deterrents to drinking and driving
  - introducing stricter safety compliance requirements for commercial carriers
  - implementing measures to enhance the safety of passengers in motor vehicles
  - improving driver training
  - reducing the number of high-risk drivers on the road via several initiatives
  - implementing stricter vehicle inspection requirements

- Increase consumer protection through such means as implementing Internet sales regulations and new cost-of-credit disclosure provisions, improving the mediation process in tenant-landlord relationships, and making access to consumer information easier.
- Improve the exchange of fuel tax information with other jurisdictions and, in conjunction with Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Finance, develop a fairer and more efficient Aboriginal fuel tax exemption system.
- Improve the enforcement of department programs in the areas of fuel and tobacco sales and consumer and business registrations and undertake initiatives to reduce the underground economy.
- Improve planning and accountability in the department by developing more inclusive business-planning processes, accountability systems, increased effectiveness of program management systems and processes through more data and information collection, quality assurance initiatives, and analysis of consumer complaints and inquiries.
- Develop, with the Office of Economic Development, a policy framework for delivering e-services addressing authentication, non-repudiation, e-signatures, and privacy issues raised in these areas by the use of the Internet.
- Review and modify authentication and security policy for credentialing documents such as birth certificates, driver's licence and photo identifications.

2. Service Delivery

The following priorities are intended to improve the quality of service delivery by increasing the utilization of existing physical locations, improving staff training, and expanding e-service options.

- Develop additional, user-friendly, customer-appropriate information and transaction services through electronic service channels, including an enhanced web navigation process and improved organization of information and services currently located on the department website.
- Maintain service at in-person locations by ensuring that appropriate staff and equipment are available to meet customer demand.
- Update the training of staff.

- Establish Registry of Motor Vehicle services in Richmond and Hants counties through co-location with other department services.

3. Registry and Information Management Services

The following priorities are intended to improve registration processes, to enhance quality, access and security to the department's data and information holdings, and to enable sharing of data among other government departments and agencies:

- Implement the land titles system (Registry 2000) in Colchester County as a first site and prepare for province-wide roll-out; improve systems and processes in the Registry of Deeds so the two systems can work in tandem.
- Improve internal and inter-agency data exchange in vital statistics, geographic data, and property data.
- Streamline back-office processes and maximize effectiveness of automation in Vital Statistics and Business Registrations.
- Strengthen interdepartmental and intergovernmental participation in the province's geographic information system, GeoNOVA.
- Continue civic address geo-referencing in six counties to support multiple provincial and municipal requirements such as E-911 and permitting.
- Prepare service level agreements for half of the department's major applications and initiate an enterprise architecture plan for the department.
- Increase the number of business clients who can complete necessary licensing requirements through the NSBR to 35 per cent.

4. Municipal Relations

The following priorities are intended to provide high-quality advice and other supports to municipalities in order to make them more effective in their operations, improve their financial viability, and put them on the course of sustainable development. In addition, the department wishes to develop a shared vision on the future role of municipalities over the longer term:

- Prepare amendments to the Municipal Elections Act, the Municipal Grants Act and the Municipal Government Act to ensure municipalities have a modern legislative framework in which to operate.

- Develop a comprehensive municipal viability strategy and implement a revised equalization formula for municipalities.
- Refine and implement a municipal indicators rating process, collect the appropriate data for each municipality, and determine a baseline rating.
- Support sustainable municipal development by providing cost-effective planning assistance.
- Undertake initiatives to improve the quality of municipal infrastructure with a special focus on green projects (cost-shared with the federal government) and implement inclusive transportation systems in five rural areas.
- Formally commence, establish a project team, and develop a work plan and consultation process in order to initiate a broad-based, consensus-built vision for the future of local governance in Nova Scotia.
- Support municipal e-government initiatives to allow for better service delivery to all municipalities of the province.
- Review standards, maintain processes, and meet other requirements for an improved non-resident land ownership inventory.

5. Alternative Program Delivery

The following priorities are intended to lead government in developing alternative service delivery mechanisms by developing partnerships that result in quality, cost-effective services to Nova Scotians and recommendations from reviews that provide the most efficient and effective use of government resources. It also intends to provide a high-quality assessment service that provides a reliable and stable assessment roll to each of the 55 municipalities.

- Develop a strategy for alternative program delivery (APD) for government, including a marketing strategy and a candidate assessment methodology and implement the marketing strategy.
- Begin a process to migrate licences, permits and registrations from the Departments of Environment and Labour and Agriculture and Fisheries (112 approvals in total).
- Complete an alternative program delivery review of the Assessment Services Program and Commercial Vehicle Compliance Program, including subsequent implementation and transition if warranted.

- Through the use of a partnership arrangement with other stakeholder departments, develop a single window for services relating to bereaved individuals and families.
- Represent SNSMR in identifying and developing partnership opportunities with Nova Scotia municipalities.
- Provide property owners, municipal units, and department staff access to the formal and preliminary assessment roll information via call centres during the appeal period.
- Develop a client relations strategy regarding assessments that includes a more proactive media approach, heightened visibility in communities, more informative assessment notices, and a mediation mechanism for appeals.
- Undertake a number of technology-related initiatives that will allow municipal units, staff, and the public to access the assessment roll and to upgrade the system used for valuating commercial properties in the province.
- Revitalize the provincial assessment inspection system in specific areas of the province.

Tourism and Culture

Mission:

To champion the development, preservation, and promotion of tourism, culture, and heritage to stimulate economic growth, develop sustainable communities, and provide for stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of all Nova Scotians.

Strategic Goals

- Develop the economic and export potential of Nova Scotia's tourism and cultural industries.
- Support economic growth and quality of life in communities throughout Nova Scotia through development of our culture, heritage, and tourism sectors.
- Provide stewardship of Nova Scotia's heritage and cultural identity through development, preservation, and presentation of Nova Scotia's cultural and heritage resources and institutions.
- Deliver effective and accountable corporate support to government through records management, archival programs, and protocol services.

Core Business Areas

The core businesses of Tourism and Culture are centred on four strategic areas:

1. Economic Growth

This involves development of Nova Scotia's tourism and cultural industries. Tourism activities include planning and research, product development, marketing, operation of provincial visitor information centres, development of partnerships and sales, and policy. Culture activities include planning and research, policy, and cultural industries development.

2. Community Development

This involves enhancement of economic growth and quality of life in communities throughout Nova Scotia. Tourism activities include destination marketing, community tourism development, and partnerships with regional tourism industry associations. Culture activities centre on community cultural development. Heritage activities include support and assistance to community museums and heritage organizations.

3. Stewardship

This involves development, preservation, and presentation of Nova Scotia's cultural and heritage resources. Heritage activities include operation of the Nova Scotia Museum and the Nova Scotia Public Archives and management of provincial heritage collections and resources.

4. Corporate Support

This involves delivery of professional services to government and the department to facilitate effective corporate support and good governance. Activities include records management, protocol services, management, policy, and communications.

Priorities

1. Economic Growth

- Implement the 2002 Integrated Tourism Plan. Activities include:
  - high-impact marketing campaigns in core touring markets of Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, northeastern USA, and Europe
  - special "CAT" promotion in Boston involving Tourism and Culture, Bay Ferries, and over 100 private-sector tourism businesses
  - developing attractions and experiences that build on Nova Scotia's heritage, culture, outdoors, and strong seacoast positioning
  - improving industry quality and competitiveness through market-readiness programs such as TradeSmart, a best business practices program focused on Nova Scotia's travel trade sector
  - continuing development of 12-month industry through increasing focus on meetings and conventions market, and through spring, fall, and winter advertising campaigns centred on specialized publications and fulfilment programs
  - actively developing and promoting niche products to attract incremental visitation from speciality markets, such as meetings and conventions, outdoor and nature, golf, and group touring
- Work with government departments and agencies to develop a provincial tourism policy to ensure that the strategic priorities of Nova Scotia's tourism sector are more effectively considered in government decisions.

- In collaboration with the Tourism Partnership Council, dedicate efforts and resources to enhancing the competitiveness of the "Nova Scotia.com" website and optimizing its e-commerce capabilities.
- Partner with other departments and industry to develop measures that support Nova Scotia's brand and competitive position in core tourism markets as a seacoast and scenic touring destination. Efforts will focus on encouraging sound management (preservation and development) and enhanced access to Nova Scotia's natural environment, which is of strategic value to the continued economic growth and competitiveness of Nova Scotia's tourism sector.
- Undertake a comprehensive and independent review of Nova Scotia's visitor information delivery network to develop an enhanced and integrated system that builds on new technology and partnership opportunities to maximize return on investment.
- Build on a new department structure and programming centred on cultural industry growth. In partnership with industry, develop and implement strategies for sub-sectors in the culture sector. Investments will be focused on developing export sales opportunities for cultural products in design, new media, music and sound recording, production crafts, and publishing.
- Create a new partnership with the culture sector that will provide strategic guidance and direction to government in Nova Scotia's culture sector and implementation of sub-sector strategies.
- Work with the Acadian community and private sector to develop and enhance tourism product and market opportunities related to Acadian celebrations.
- Support Acadian activities and events through the creation of on-line exhibit and historical information available through the Nova Scotia Public Archives and the Nova Scotia Museum.
- Establish a single point of contact within Tourism and Culture to support enhanced coordination and development of tourism, culture, and heritage activities for the Acadian 2003–05 celebrations.

2. Community Development

- Assist the community of Joggins and stakeholders along the Bay of Fundy to capitalize on the international tourism and heritage significance of the paleontology site at Joggins and the spectacular marine environment along the Fundy coast.
- Establish a new function within the Nova Scotia Museum system with a primary responsibility to deliver enhanced expertise and coordination with communities in research, training, preservation, presentation, and promotion of local heritage. Efforts will focus on partnering with communities to promote utilization of best practices in the management of heritage resources.
- Create new partnerships on cultural development to provide strategic direction to government on community cultural priorities and investment. Partnerships with communities will support the department's move to provide open, competitive, and accountable programs for cultural development.
- In partnership with the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS), initiate a review of the Multicultural Act to determine if legislative amendments are required to support Nova Scotia's multicultural community.
- Establish internships within the department to examine and advance priorities of Nova Scotia's multicultural community.
- Based on completion of a Gaelic study in 2001, partner with key stakeholders in Nova Scotia's Gaelic community to prepare and implement a Gaelic development plan in 2002-03. Efforts will be focused on implementing measures that support preservation and promotion of Nova Scotia's Gaelic culture and language.
- Initiate a comprehensive strategy to keep Nova Scotian communities informed about tourism, culture, and heritage services delivered by the department. This will include making program and service information available on line and ensuring clients are kept informed about policy and programming initiatives.

3. Stewardship

- Undertake a comprehensive analysis of the provincial museum system to identify measures that address gaps in the development, preservation, and promotion of Nova Scotia's heritage. Specific initiatives, including interpretive/educational programs, will be introduced to address gaps in sites representing Mi'kmaq, Acadian, and Black Nova Scotian heritage.
- The Nova Scotia Museum will provide a comprehensive schedule of exhibits and interpretive programs in communities throughout the province featuring Nova Scotia's history and culture.
- Partner with the federal government and communities to initiate a virtual museum initiative interpreting the heritage and culture of coastal Nova Scotia to support the province's position as a seacoast tourism destination. Increase accessibility of provincial and community heritage resources and genealogy information available on line through the Nova Scotia Museum and the Nova Scotia Public Archives to promote educational resources and opportunities for Nova Scotians.
- Evaluate the potential for Hants County to showcase and teach historic arts and crafts in a heritage setting.
- Expand storage capacity at the Nova Scotia Archives to improve and enhance public access to heritage resources.
- Partner with the Department of Natural Resources and stakeholders to ensure that tourism and heritage values are reflected in the development and implementation of management plans for provincial Crown land.
- Collaborate with Environment and Labour to examine tourism, culture, and heritage opportunities in the preservation and development of provincial wilderness areas.

4. Corporate Support and Good Governance

- Undertake an independent review and analysis that evaluates opportunities to increase and maximize earned recoveries through retail gift shop sales at the provincial museums, visitor information centres, Nova Scotia Archives, Protocol Office, Nova Scotia Art Bank, and Centre for Craft and Design.

- Initiate an independent review of the department's tourism literature distribution system to determine if a more effective and efficient model is feasible.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the department's program to inspect and license Nova Scotia's accommodations and campgrounds to determine if it could be integrated with other province-wide quality inspection programs.
- Undertake a review of the Centre for Craft and Design, in partnership with the culture community, to determine the most effective and strategic approach to advance sector priorities.
- Finalize and implement recommendations of the Art Bank review to maximize Nova Scotia's investment and support of visual arts.
- Develop a coordinated and streamlined approach to the management of contracts including *Bluenose II*, Nova Scotia resorts, Upper Clements Theme Park, and Check In.
- Provide enhanced coordination to clients requesting multi-division assistance in tourism, culture, and heritage through development of an integrated department-wide approach to evaluating and responding to proposals. The new approach will be supported by a contact management and investment tracking system.
- Increase the number of programs that are regularly evaluated throughout the department to ensure that programs are effective and that the strategic goals and priorities of the department are being achieved.
- Deliver support for implementation of the Order of Nova Scotia, the 2002 Annual Premier's Conference, and the Queen's 50th Jubilee celebrations.
- Provide leadership and expertise in supporting departments with implementation of the Corporate Records Management Policy and strengthen the application of technology to records management functions.

- Develop and implement a departmental records management system to support enhanced decision making and services to clients. Improved records management will facilitate enhanced access to information, ensure consistent and effective information delivery, and integrate information systems within the department for the benefit of both government and the public.
- Enhance the department's ability to support the tourism, culture, and heritage sectors through assessment of sector needs and development of HR strategy to address priorities.
- Improve the integration and effectiveness of the department's Internet sites through development and implementation of a Web strategy designed to create strategic linkages between tourism, culture, and heritage.

Transportation and Public Works

Mission:

To construct, maintain, and manage provincial highways, buildings, and related infrastructure, and provide accommodation, property, and procurement services in support of sustainable economic growth and social well-being.

Strategic Goals

- Enhance the value and safety of the transportation system.
- Manage provincial real property, effectively and efficiently, for government's best strategic advantage.
- Provide the infrastructure and related policies necessary to support economic growth of the province.
- Provide efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sound government services to address customers' needs.

Core Business Areas

The department is comprised of three core operational areas: Highway Operations, Public Works, and Government Services. Supporting sections include Policy and Planning, Public Affairs and Communications, Human Resources, Financial Services, and Information Technology.

1. Highway Operations

Construction, maintenance, and operation of provincial roads, bridges, and ferries.

2. Public Works

Planning of transportation infrastructure and planning and management of roadway and building infrastructure, including provision of highway and bridge design services, project management services for government construction projects, environmental services, and administration of 10 industrial water utilities.

3. Government Services

Provision of accommodation and property services to provincial government departments and agencies; administration of government procurement and supply processes, including computer hardware, software, and IT-related programming and consulting services; provision of postal services for government; and administration of industrial parks and malls.

Priorities

1. Highway Operations

- Continue to provide cost-effective maintenance services for provincial roads, bridges, and ferries and snow and ice control on provincial highways so that public satisfaction levels and condition ratings are maintained.
- Adjust the provincial salting program to address concerns raised by the federal government's review of the use of road salts and their effect on the environment. Actions will include continued construction of new storage facilities to increase storage capacity by an additional 10 per cent; expanding the use of Road Weather Information Systems and advance forecasting by at least 40 per cent by December 2002; doubling the number of department units equipped to use prewet salt and sand/salt mixtures by December 2002; and implementing new winter service levels with consistent criteria on a province-wide basis by winter 2002–03.
- Continue expanding the use of the private sector for highway maintenance operations, where it is cost-effective and impacts on existing staff are minimal, while ensuring that service levels are maintained.
- Improve the quality of the capital construction program by using End Product Specifications on all suitable paving contracts (contracts of 10,000 tons of asphalt or more) and expanding the program to include concrete and gravel. This program increases the contractor's responsibility for their product quality.
- Continue construction on Highway 101 from Mount Uniacke to Ellershouse and commence construction on Highway 125, as part of the federal cost-shared agreement signed in 2001.
- Upgrade the Seal Island Bridge on Highway 105, including strengthening and deck replacement design.
- Ensure cost-effective and reliable ferry services by initiating design and tenders to start the process of replacing the *Joshua Slocum* ferry.

2. Public Works

- Coordinate the pre-tender planning of the following projects: Highway 101, St Croix to Avonport, twinning; Highway 104, New Glasgow to Sutherlands River, twinning; Highway 103, Otter Lake to Hammonds Plains Road, twinning; Highway 103, Barrington; Highway 107, Burnside to Highway 102; and Highway 113.
- Continue development, management, and delivery of comprehensive highway safety programs (e.g., Crosswalk Safety Program) by fulfilling responsibilities identified in the Memorandum of Understanding with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations dealing with driver, vehicle, and roadway elements.
- Implement a Road Listing Program (comprising policies and procedures, transportation geographic information system, network management system and information databases) for improved inventory and management of departmental road information. The up-to-date information, in graphic and database form, combined with the management systems, will enable improved business decisions to be made by both district and head office staff.
- Continue to plan and implement an Environmental Management System, which will provide tools to identify and resolve environmental issues when developing and implementing projects and programs, for both highway operations and provincially owned and leased buildings.
- Reduce energy requirements, by installing new and efficient architectural, mechanical, and electrical systems in all new and existing buildings, in support of a Green Building Policy.
- Participate, with the other three Atlantic provinces, in the development of a harmonized trucking strategy.
- Participate with all provincial and territorial governments to continue to pressure the federal government to take steps to address the financial viability of small airports and liberalization of federal air access policies to support the economic growth of the province, especially for the tourism and business industries.

- Undertake activities to enhance the safe operation of provincial railways. These activities will include the establishment of agreements with the Canadian Transportation Agency and the Transportation Safety Board regarding government obligations under the Railways Act; the development of a railway audit and performance evaluation processes; and the provision of railway incident and accident information to the national database.
- Implement new commercial van safety regulations to ensure that all public passenger vehicles involved in inter-municipal transport, regardless of size, adhere to the highest provincial standard of safety.

3. Government Services

- Continue supplier development programs and Nova Scotia Business Opportunities Initiatives to improve the flow of information of all public sector, federal, provincial, and MASH (municipalities, agencies, schools, and hospitals) buying opportunities to Nova Scotia companies. In addition, promote the expanded value and use of e-commerce in public procurement.
- Evaluate, award, and negotiate the corporate telecommunication (telephone: long-distance, voice, paging, cellular; and data communications) Request for Proposal and develop service level agreements with vendor, client departments, and other organizations.
- Develop an application hosting strategy to determine where software applications should reside (departmentally, corporately, or other).
- Continue joint federal/provincial procurement and property development initiatives, such as the Strategic Procurement Council. This council includes representatives from Public Works and Government Services Canada, Halifax Regional Municipality, Province of Nova Scotia, and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. It was formed to jointly participate in activities such as supplier briefings, comparing initiatives, and common activities.
- Provide ongoing primary support to volunteer service providers in their use of Trunk Mobile Radio and the legacy Nova Scotia Integrated Mobile Radio.

- Initiate a customer satisfaction survey to determine the satisfaction of government clients with accommodation services and develop an audit process for government-leased premises to ensure compliance with leases.

Government
Business Plan
Province of Nova Scotia

Part Three
Public Service Votes

Aboriginal Affairs

Mission:

To strengthen government's ability to address Aboriginal issues for the benefit of all Nova Scotians, while respecting Mi'kmaq culture and building a sustainable framework for Mi'kmaq-government relations.

Strategic Goals

- To represent Nova Scotians' interests effectively in intergovernmental, bilateral, and tri-party initiatives and negotiations.
- To facilitate and support a coordinated approach within government on matters related to Aboriginal issues.
- To foster Aboriginal economic development and community capacity building across Nova Scotia.
- To enhance awareness of Mi'kmaq culture.
- To build a sustainable framework for First Nation–government relations.

Core Business Areas

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) carries out its responsibilities through the following three core business areas:

1. Negotiations and Related Discussions

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for coordinating the negotiation process and representing the province's interests in negotiations and related discussions with the federal government and the Mi'kmaq.

2. Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations

This area includes working with Aboriginal communities and organizations and other levels of government to coordinate Aboriginal initiatives, develop strategies, and build and maintain a sustainable framework for First Nation–government relations.

3. Interdepartmental Coordination, Policy Analysis, and Strategic Advice

This business area includes providing policy and strategic advice and support to departments and agencies concerning Aboriginal issues. The office also works with departments and agencies to develop and implement the government's overall approach to Aboriginal issues.

Priorities

1. Negotiations and Related Discussions

- Lead negotiation of a Framework Agreement with the Mi'kmaq and the Government of Canada. This agreement will outline the process and procedures of negotiations and identify the substantive issues to be negotiated by the parties.
- Work with departments to develop an approach on consultation that will address the nature of and process regarding government's consultation with Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and the specific needs of provincial departments and agencies.
- Continue to coordinate provincial departments' and agencies' input into and participation in negotiations of treaty rights and related issues. This corporate approach to preparing for negotiations will ensure that provincial interests are fully identified and represented through the negotiations process.
- Develop and implement a strategy to enhance public awareness and understanding on the negotiation process. Creating public understanding is critical to the successful resolution of these issues. OAA will need to utilize a range of strategic communication methods to increase public awareness and knowledge of the process.
- In conjunction with other departments, take steps to ensure that the interests of municipalities, third parties, and other stakeholders are understood and respected. This will involve clearly identifying stakeholders' interests and developing a mechanism to provide timely and accurate information.

2. Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations

- Continue to work with our colleagues in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial/Aboriginal (FPTA) National Forum to identify practical solutions to issues facing Aboriginal people. In the coming year, we will be achieving progress on the identified priorities of strengthening Aboriginal participation in the economy and youth. At the provincial level, OAA will work with departments to identify opportunities and build capacities to adapt provincial approaches to the national strategies.
- Continue to meet with other Maritime officials to pursue information sharing and collaborative opportunities.
- Continue to coordinate provincial involvement on the Mi'kmaq-Canada-Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum with federal and Mi'kmaq counterparts. With the introduction of the treaty and related issues negotiation, the forum will focus on addressing social and economic issues of mutual interest.
- Provide support for the 10th annual Mi'kmaq Treaty Day events held at Province House in the fall of 2002.
- Continue to provide a corporate approach on bilateral and trilateral initiatives with departments, governments, and Aboriginal entities to develop working relations, provide information, develop skills, enhance awareness, and facilitate effective discussions to reach common understanding and mutually acceptable approaches.

3. Interdepartmental Coordination, Policy Analysis, and Strategic Advice

- With the assistance of departments and agencies, work on developing and implementing an Aboriginal policy framework to guide government's overall approach to Aboriginal issues. The policy framework will be consistent with and support government's overall strategic direction on economic and social policy. This framework will enhance effectiveness and efficiency and provide a strategic approach to Aboriginal issues, as well as clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Use a network of interdepartmental teams to support a coordinated approach to negotiations and other Aboriginal issues.

- Ensure that appropriate communication tools are developed and implemented for sharing information with departments and agencies. For example, OAA will develop and implement interdepartmental protocols and policies to ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to addressing Aboriginal issues.
- Continue to work closely with departments and agencies to provide advice and support to them in defining their approaches to addressing Aboriginal issues.
- Facilitate processes within government to enhance cultural awareness of Mi'kmaq people. In the last year, a total of 120 participants from 17 departments have taken the Orientation to Mi'kmaq First Nation Culture course. In the coming year, OAA will be focusing on another course that will build on the knowledge obtained in the Orientation to Mi'kmaq First Nation Culture course by providing basic knowledge and skills that will enable staff to work more effectively with Aboriginal communities and organizations in Nova Scotia.
- Identify, prepare, and distribute Aboriginal-related research and information for use by provincial departments and agencies. This includes identifying research needs and priorities, conducting research, and ensuring that it is properly distributed to departments and agencies.

4. Human Resources

- Build staff strengths and diverse skills to ensure that staff have the competencies necessary to achieve current and future goals of the office. This can be achieved by providing ongoing team-building and professional development opportunities for staff. In addition, OAA will continue to work with other agencies and departments to ensure that the appropriate skill levels exist within government to effectively deal with Aboriginal issues.

Communications Nova Scotia

Mission:

Provide communications leadership and excellence, using the highest standards of accuracy, clarity, consistency, and reliability, to help Nova Scotians understand government's plan, initiatives, and achievements.

Strategic Goals

- Through quality communications leadership and practices, help Nova Scotians understand the actions of their government.
- Obtain the highest quality and best-value communications products and services for government.
- Expand and strengthen internal and external communications by making communications an integral part of all business in government.
- Enhance opportunities for economic growth in related private-sector communications fields.

Core Business Areas

1. Communications Planning

As government's central communications agency, Communications Nova Scotia provides strategic communications planning and advice.

2. Creative Services

Communications Nova Scotia provides in-house services, subcontracting, and project management for video and audio production, graphic design (for conventional and new media projects), photography, editorial services, multimedia production, and Internet and electronic publishing; acts as government's Web master; and is responsible for administration of the provincial Visual Identity Policy and Internet Content Policy.

3. Media Services

Communications Nova Scotia is the government agency of record, providing creative and administrative services for the preparation and placement of advertising. Media Services distributes government news releases, provides media monitoring, logistical support for events and a variety of editorial services, including editing/rewriting of news releases, feature stories, speeches, and ad copy.

4. Publication Services

Communications Nova Scotia manages government's printing requirements (including stationery, brochures, books, forms, specialty items and security printing) through in-house resources and by providing technical specifications, tendering, and quality control for subcontracted projects; manages the provincial Co-publishing Program.

Priorities

1. Communications Planning

- Develop a corporate communication plan and strategic communications plans for each department.
- Support the improvement of internal communication by developing (with the Public Service Commission) a framework for internal communications for use by managers across government.
- Embrace emerging technologies to facilitate and lead their effective use as communications tools.

2. Creative Services

- Work with client departments and other central agencies to develop a strategy to improve the use of internet and intranet resources.
- Promote internal communications services so that government clients are able to acquire the most effective and economical products and services.
  - Communications Nova Scotia will expand its client survey and act on the results to ensure that we are continuously improving our services.
  - Work with TPW to coordinate the installation of display case(s) in government buildings for exhibition of key education and awareness products.

3. Good Management

- Ensure that every employee of CNS benefits from performance management—including a formal performance appraisal every year.
- Analyse results from the last client survey and act on the results; fine tune the survey and do it again.
- Model effective use of technology and assign resources for optimal impact.
- Rebuild the CNS Intranet site to facilitate the exchange of "best practices" among communications professionals.

Emergency Measures Organization

Mission:

To ensure the safety and security of Nova Scotians and their property by providing for a prompt and coordinated response to an emergency.

Strategic Goals

The strategic goals of the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) are to

- Decrease the province's financial exposure in the aftermath of emergencies.
- Increase the ability of municipalities and industries to effectively manage local emergencies.
- Maintain the safety and security of Nova Scotians and provide for a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies in the face of increasing threats.
- Increase the speed and efficiency with which callers to 911 receive emergency assistance.

Core Business Areas

1. 911 Emergency Reporting Service

This core business area ensures that individuals have prompt access to emergency assistance for the protection of their safety and security. By enabling prompt reporting of an emergency, response time is reduced and so is the cost of emergencies, in terms of response costs, property damage and lives.

The four programs in this business area include providing equipment, standards, and policy, as well as conducting regular quality assurance monitoring; providing training for 911 call takers; providing public education for schools, seniors, and other target audiences on the use and availability of 911 service; and coordinating the input of data from municipal units across the province to the telephone company-owned database.

2. Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue

EMO supports the Nova Scotia Volunteer Ground Search and Rescue program, both administratively and financially. Nova Scotia has been recognized as a national leader for its well-organized and trained volunteer Ground Search and Rescue program. Each year more than 1,600 volunteers from 26 teams conduct approximately 70 searches for lost people. Within this business area, EMO pays the travel costs for volunteers from home to the search site, pays for annual workshops and training, and pays for the replacement of certain pieces of equipment lost or damaged during a search. In addition, EMO provides an annual team operating grant and a grant of the same value to the Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association to which the teams belong.

3. Emergency Preparedness Training

EMO trains municipal, provincial, and private sector emergency managers to design and implement emergency plans so that they can respond in a prompt and coordinated manner to a state of emergency.

4. Integrated Emergency Planning

The province's Emergency Measures Act requires all municipalities to have an emergency plan and an emergency coordinator and to have that plan approved by the Minister. Each year EMO reviews and evaluates each plan, and a report card is produced for the Minister. The role of EMO is to ensure that an integrated emergency preparedness network exists across the province. This is accomplished by ensuring that all plans meet a minimum acceptable standard and that plans of adjacent municipal units are complementary in nature.

5. Integrated Emergency Response

Arrangements must be worked out in advance to ensure that the right resources are available in an emergency. EMO coordinates response to an emergency through effective communications, pre-arranged mutual aid agreements, and established networking protocols. EMO delivers an integrated provincial network of incident reporting, internal and external communications, public information release, emergency response, and post-incident debriefing.

Priorities

1. 911 Emergency Reporting Service

- Replace aging 911 call taking equipment with new, state-of-the-art technology, which allows call takers to have all of the necessary information on the caller and on the agencies that respond at their fingertips. New equipment is required because the phone company is replacing its network, and the existing equipment is not compliant.
- Review and update standard operating procedures, in partnership with all stakeholders.
- Design and implement a compliance auditing program for 911 calls to reduce the potential for errors.
- Pilot test the delivery of digitized civic address mapping to 911 call takers; commence a pilot program to deliver mapping to at least one 911 centre in 2002-03.
- Design and implement a call-taker training program. Call-taker training was previously contracted out. EMO will deliver a more extensive program at equal or lower cost.
- Expand the existing 911 distance marker program, in co-operation with the Department of Transport and Public Works, to assist cellular phone users in pinpointing their location for 911 operators.
- Reduce the incidence of frivolous and non-emergency calls placed to 911 and avert substantial expenses by carrying out public education campaigns.
- Publish an annual report on 911 expenditures in compliance with the 911 Cost Recovery Regulations, which require an annual audited financial statement of the Cost Recovery Fund.

2. Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR)

- Improve control over GSAR expenditures by developing expense guidelines for teams allowing both EMO and the police to better predict and manage their costs.

- Create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Parks Canada and with municipal police for GSAR expenditures in order to address gaps in expectations when search teams are engaged in searches at the request of the police. These gaps cause delays in expense reimbursement, and this has the potential to erode the quality of the working relationship.
- Improve GSAR external communications through a media management workshop.
- Expand GSAR capabilities through increased training opportunities for volunteers.

3. Emergency Preparedness Training

- Deliver four Basic Emergency Preparedness training courses.
- Convene an annual conference for 55 municipal emergency measures coordinators.
- Deliver one Emergency Operations Centre Course.
- Deliver one Bio-chemical Workshop.
- Deliver six Mayors and Elected Officials Seminars.
- Pilot one regional advanced training course, Emergency Site Management, for 36 emergency site managers; make revisions based on feedback; and deliver one additional course in the 2002–03 fiscal year.
- Collaborate with municipal, provincial, and federal emergency preparedness partners to conduct a province-wide emergency exercise.
- Facilitate provincial student attendance for training and education at the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College in Arnprior, Ontario.
- Conduct an emergency evacuations plan-writing workshop for 50 persons responsible for emergency evacuation planning and conduct an exercise.
- Provide one-day regional emergency preparedness workshops in each of the three provincial EMO zones.
- Participate in ongoing Atlantic provinces' training initiatives under the Atlantic Co-operation in Emergencies Agreement.

4. Integrated Emergency Planning

- Implement a provincial government corporate emergency planning strategy.
- Establish measurable targets for municipal emergency plan evaluation and compliance.
- Incorporate a system of incident command within the provincial emergency operations centre.
- Participate with the federal government in a national strategy to prepare for terrorist acts.
- Implement a program to improve public participation in emergency preparedness.

5. Integrated Emergency Response

- Negotiate an agreement with the federal government for disaster financial assistance that is fairer to Nova Scotia.
- Implement standard operating procedures for the province's Emergency Operations Centre.
- Participate with the federal government in a national strategy to respond to terrorist acts.
- Participate with the federal government in a national strategy to mitigate natural disasters.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office

Mission:

To review decisions of public bodies relating to applications for access to records, in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Municipal Government Act.

Strategic Goals

- Increase efforts to educate the public on its rights in accordance with the act and offer training to public bodies and local public bodies, particularly municipalities, hospitals, universities, and school boards, which were made subject to the act over the past two years.
- Respond to opportunities to speak to interested groups on access and privacy issues.
- Encourage increased awareness in public bodies and local public bodies of the privacy implications attending their responsibilities.

Core Business Areas

1. Reviewing decisions

The office receives complaints from individuals regarding decisions of public bodies in response to applications for access to documents. This area includes attempting mediation to resolve the complaints and, where mediation fails to fully resolve the issues raised, issuing reports making recommendations with respect to the disclosure or non disclosure.

2. Resolving privacy complaints

The office assists in resolving complaints of invasions of privacy.

Priorities

- Ensure timely responses to "requests for review" and privacy complaints.
- Educate the public with respect to its rights under the act.
- Offer training to public bodies and local public bodies as resources permit.
- Increase awareness among public bodies and local public bodies of the privacy implications of their responsibilities.
- Encourage appropriate amendments to the act with respect to the powers of the review officer to investigate privacy complaints.

Human Rights Commission

Mission:

To reduce individual and systemic discrimination in support of a society characterized by equality.

We value

- Respect and dignity, through words and actions in relation to all members of the public
- Diversity, recognizing that everyone can contribute to our society
- Understanding, through education as a focal point for change
- Credibility, in being seen as independent and truly autonomous from government
- Integrity, in practising what we preach and in serving as a model for government, other agencies, and the private sector.

Strategic Goals

- To continue to promote the commission as a credible and effective organization through better program delivery, improved service to the public, and enhanced partnerships with other organizations.
- To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaint process.
- To help foster the development of a more equitable society and fair workplaces by proactively addressing discrimination in all its forms.

Core Business Areas

1. Investigation and Settlement of Complaints

- Attempts early interventions to resolve disputes before they become formal complaints of discrimination.
- Investigates complaints of discrimination (approximately 300 active files in 2001-02) and recommends settlement options to the commissioners.
- Identifies emerging issues and targets skill development for commission staff in response.
- Provides alternative dispute resolution services.

2. Public Education and Outreach

- Raises awareness of human rights issues and encourages peace, harmony and respect for all Nova Scotians.

- Develops and maintains effective links with government, business, the legal community, schools, agencies, and community groups to raise awareness of human rights issues and compliance with the Human Rights Act.
- Fosters social research on human rights issues and topics.
- Provides education and training programs in workplaces, schools, and other settings to deliver the commission's mandate.
- Ensures cost-recovery in service delivery wherever possible.
- Promotes the goals of affirmative action by monitoring the effectiveness of current agreements and signing new agreements.

Priorities

1. Investigation and Settlement of Complaints

- In co-operation with Mi'kmaq and other aboriginal communities, develop an aboriginal action plan to improve the services that the commission offers to these communities, particularly through the development of alternative dispute resolution.
- Develop a detailed client service plan for handling public inquiries.
- Review administrative guidelines for interventions and conciliations, to further improve the process.
- Continue development of processes to address systemic discrimination such as monitoring of workplace affirmative action agreements.
- Prevent a backlog of cases by continuing to review the complaint process.
- Pursue more effective methods of tracking case management.
- Develop a code of ethics for commission staff.

2. Public Education and Outreach

- Continue involvement with government, institutional, and community partners to further develop linkages and forums for discussion and change; this includes oral presentations on trends and concerns to government and opposition caucuses in conjunction with the filing of the commission's annual report.
- Develop a comprehensive communications plan, including a unified theme, for 2002 activities.
- Continue communication initiatives aimed at increasing the commission's public profile.

- Continue policy research and development in partnership with external organizations in emerging areas of human rights, including undertaking special projects aimed at mental health consumers and public education on political belief as a prohibited grounds as specified in the settlement agreement for Archibald Kaiser v. Executive Council of Nova Scotia.
- Promote the commission as a source of information and resources on human rights issues and compliance under the act for employers and employees in the public, private, educational, and not-for-profit sectors.

Intergovernmental Affairs

Mission:

To provide leadership in the development of corporate strategies for Nova Scotia's relations with governments and organizations.

Strategic Goals

- Ensure that the interests of Nova Scotia are preserved and promoted in relations and negotiations with other governments in Canada and abroad.
- Promote and foster co-operation between the provinces of Atlantic Canada in development of policy and delivery of services.
- Ensure that information regarding policies and initiatives in other governments that can affect Nova Scotia is accurately and promptly provided to the decision makers responsible for advancing this government's core priorities.

Core Business Areas

1. Intergovernmental Strategy

Coordinate the overall inter-governmental strategy of the Nova Scotia government, to ensure a corporate approach to other governments.

2. Negotiations

Ensure fairness to Nova Scotia in negotiations with the government of Canada and other governments.

3. Regional Alliances

Build on regional alliances to promote issues of fairness for Nova Scotians and Atlantic Canadians, and to promote regional programs and services that benefit citizens.

4. International Linkages

Expand Nova Scotia's international linkages to support and promote Nova Scotia's interests abroad.

5. Building Awareness

Increase awareness and understanding, both within the Nova Scotia government and in other governments, of this province's position relative to key intergovernmental issues.

Priorities

1. Intergovernmental Strategy

- Gather intelligence and develop central agency expertise by monitoring federal and other provincial developments to ensure that the Nova Scotia government can act in a proactive fashion.
- Develop Nova Scotia's position on Canadian governance issues, national unity, and constitutional matters and advance these positions with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments.
- Provide strategic policy advice and support to the Premier as he advances Nova Scotia's priority agenda at First Ministers' Meetings, Annual Premiers' Conferences, and other key intergovernmental meetings.
- Through consultation with line departments, promote the identification of intergovernmental priorities and of opportunities for federal-provincial and interprovincial co-operation.
- Build strategic alliances on federal-provincial issues with other provinces and territories so as to develop common positions that Premiers and Ministers can advance to Ottawa.
- Through participation in intergovernmental and interdepartmental committees, ensure that the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Social Union addresses Nova Scotia's concerns and needs.

2. Negotiations

- Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Nova Scotia's position as chair of the Annual Premiers' Conference (APC), 2002-03, to ensure that Nova Scotia's concerns and interests are known and considered in the development of the agenda of the conference and in the follow-up work with the other provinces and territories that implements the Premiers' decisions.
- Provide operational and strategic policy support for negotiations with other federal-provincial-territorial governments.
- In close collaboration with the Department of Finance, seek to achieve changes in existing federal-provincial fiscal arrangements to attain fairness for Nova Scotians by coordinating negotiations with the federal government at the First Ministers' level on equalization and other fiscal arrangements.

- Coordinate the development of this province's intergovernmental and negotiating positions in such key areas as climate change, the social union, and improved federal support for post-secondary education, health, and economic development.
- Work closely with provincial departments engaged in negotiations on key Nova Scotia government priorities, such as fiscal arrangements, transportation infrastructure, health, security, and skills and labour market issues.

3. Regional Alliances

- Identify areas where a united Atlantic position towards Ottawa can yield policy and material benefits and work with Atlantic officials to develop this position for Premiers' approval.
- Coordinate the implementation of the Atlantic Action Plan and continue to identify areas where regional co-operation can yield economies of scale and more efficient delivery of services to Nova Scotians; work with other Atlantic Canadian officials to develop program proposals for the Premiers' approval.
- Provide strategic advice and support to the Premier for and during meetings of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, the Council of Maritime Premiers, and the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.
- Participate in the Steering Committee on Regional Co-operation (SCRC), which is the intergovernmental coordinating committee that provides executive support to, and negotiates the agenda for, the Council of Maritime Premiers (CMP) and the Council of Atlantic Premiers (CAP).

- Provide strategic policy assessments to the Premier and the Executive Council on the role and future directions of the Council of Maritime Premiers and the Council of Atlantic Premiers and other regional economic and policy issues.
- Participate in the Coordinating Committee that coordinates all activities of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP) Conference and meets as required between annual meetings of the principals.
- Identify areas where a united NEG/ECP position towards their respective federal governments can yield policy and material benefits and work with the regional officials to develop this position for the Premiers' and Governors' approval.
- Co-chair, with the State of Maine, the NEG/ECP Standing Committee on Trade and Globalization directed to examine and make recommendations regarding issues, opportunities and constraints related to trans-border trade and globalization relative to the New England and Eastern Canadian regions.

4. International Linkages

- Ensure that Nova Scotia's interests are fairly considered in the development of solutions to trans-border issues.
- Support the development of trade and investment and ensure that Nova Scotia government departments and agencies are kept abreast of international ideas.
- Manage, with Nova Scotia Business Incorporated, the participation of the Premier in Team Canada and Team Canada Atlantic Trade Missions.
- Collaborate with Economic Development and Protocol to ensure that the Premier is fully briefed for visits of foreign ambassadors, high commissioners, and consuls.
- Ensure that Nova Scotia policy positions are conveyed, as necessary, to Canadian diplomatic posts abroad, in particular, to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC, the Consulate-General in Boston, Massachusetts, and other posts in the United States.
- Ensure that Nova Scotia's policy and trade positions are known to the appropriate diplomatic representatives accredited to Canada.

- Provide line departments and agencies with information gathered from foreign governments and from the federal Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and its posts abroad.
- Maintain and update the database of Nova Scotia's memoranda of understanding with foreign governments.

5. Building Awareness

- Ensure that the Nova Scotian perspective is considered in the development of federal policy by working with the Intergovernmental Affairs section of the Privy Council Office, and with other federal agencies and departments in Ottawa and in the Atlantic region (e. g., the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency).
- Maintain and expand the network of federal, provincial, and territorial contacts in Intergovernmental Affairs and other departments so as to exchange information and policy positions.
- Maintain regular contact with line departments respecting their inter-governmental activity and keep them abreast of issues involving other governments and Intergovernmental Affairs activities.
- Develop communications objectives to better position the Province of Nova Scotia in its communications with other jurisdictions and with key internal audiences.

Office of the Ombudsman

Mission:

To ensure that the concerns of all citizens—including youth in the care and custody of the municipal and provincial governments—regarding principles of administrative fairness, good governance, and natural justice in the delivery of municipal and provincial public services are addressed through an independent, objective, review mechanism.

Strategic Goals

- To maintain citizens' access, including youth in the care and custody of the municipal and provincial governments, to an independent, objective, review mechanism of complaints against government with respect to administrative fairness.
- To increase citizens' awareness, including youth in the care and custody of the municipal and provincial governments, of their right to access an independent review/complaint mechanism by advising stakeholders, elected officials, and public service employees of the role of the Office of the Ombudsman.
- To maintain and ensure that all complaints are investigated objectively and thoroughly, in a confidential and timely manner, while ensuring administrative fairness and good governance by a responsible and accountable government.

Core Business Areas

1. Education

Advise citizens and provide a voice for children and youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments of their right to access internal departmental and external complaint mechanisms and of their right to access the independent, impartial complaint mechanisms of the Office of the Ombudsman.

2. Complaints

Receive and investigate complaints filed by citizens, including youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments, against provincial and municipal government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions.

3. Policy Advice

Recommend and monitor amendments to policies, procedures, and legislation that adhere to the principles of administrative fairness for citizens, including youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments. Through the recommending and monitoring component, the Office of the Ombudsman advises and educates citizens, including youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments, elected officials, and employees of the public service of the principles of administrative fairness and good governance.

Priorities

1. Education

The office will continue to undertake a more proactive role through educating and increasing the awareness of citizens, children, youth, elected officials, and employees of the public service of the right to access the Ombudsman's independent, objective review/complaint resolution mechanism and the principles of administrative fairness and good governance.

- Provide citizens, including youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments, with access to the Ombudsman's toll-free inquiry lines.
- Conduct speaking engagements, information and training sessions, focus groups, audits, and regular site visits to explain the role and mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman.
- Update communications material for the Office of the Ombudsman to include more accurate information about services available to the public.
- Maintain the current staffing level and expertise of employees responsible for the administration of the Ombudsman Act.
- Review the expanding role of the Children's Ombudsman in co-operation with the provincial government's Children and Youth Action Committee (CAYAC).

2. Complaints

The office will provide a complaint resolution process that ensures that all complaints filed by citizens, including youth in the care and custody of municipal and provincial governments, are investigated professionally, objectively, thoroughly, and in a confidential and timely manner.

- Review and monitor, on a regular basis, the complaint resolution process for efficiency and effectiveness in meeting client needs and/or expectations.
- Continue to implement written guidelines to diminish conflict of interest while investigating complaints involving the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission during the dual appointment of the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission as Ombudsman.
- Make improvements to the physical security of the Office of the Ombudsman.
- Implement YODA, a case management system for the Children's Ombudsman Section.
- Ensure that all new staff are educated on the provincial government's Code of Conduct for employees, with continued emphasis on the importance of practising confidentiality at all times.
- Request and participate in information sessions offered by various government departments to further enhance staff's knowledge and understanding of the programs and their administration within government.

3. Policy

The office will provide a service that balances a proactive role while continuing to maintain independence from government to ensure public confidence by continuing to conduct impartial, effective, and objective investigations.

- Communicate with government officials about the opportunity to access the Office of the Ombudsman to review internal polices and procedures and to provide input on administrative fairness and good governance in the delivery of government programs and services.

- Continue with and further expand upon partnerships between the Children's Ombudsman, various NGOs, and government organizations with respect to the delivery of programs relating to the rights of children and youth in care and custody of the government.

Public Prosecution Service

Mission:

To seek justice by prosecuting offences competently, with fairness and equal treatment for all persons.

Strategic Goals

- Provide a Public Prosecution Service that reflects excellence, dedication to public service, and high ethical standards.
- Provide a Public Prosecution Service that identifies and manages the resources required to carry out its mission.
- Provide a Public Prosecution Service that reflects the application of best business practices consistent with providing a high-quality service.
- Provide within the Public Prosecution Service an environment that allows for the independent exercise of prosecutorial discretion.
- Provide a Public Prosecution Service that is reflective of the community it serves.

Core Business Areas

1. Represent the Crown in the conduct of criminal and quasi-criminal matters before all levels of court.
2. Represent the Crown in the conduct of criminal appeals before all levels of courts.
3. Provide legal advice and assistance to the police and provincial law enforcement officers at their request.
4. Participate in the development of criminal law and criminal prosecutions policy.

Priorities

The priorities for the first three core business areas of the service overlap significantly thus are presented as a group.

- Maintain the core responsibility of the service to provide professional prosecutorial services.
  - Appear at all levels of court in trial and appeal proceedings.

- Develop and implement enhanced policies that will provide guidance to Crown attorneys in order to ensure consistent application throughout the service. Areas under development include
  - Policy on Decision to Prosecute
  - Disclosure Policy
  - Charge Resolution Policy
  - training in relation to policies
- Provide continuing education to full-time and per diem Crown attorneys and support staff through internal and external educational opportunities in order to enhance the level of expertise within the service, which will contribute to the provision of professional prosecution services.
- Implement a Case Management Information System that allows efficient and effective provision of professional prosecution services, thus avoiding the deficiencies of manual information management practices. In particular, the service will develop and implement a computerized offender history reporting system and provide a case management system that ensures information access across the service.
- Continue implementation of the Communications Plan in order to enhance community understanding of the role of the service as well as ensure effective internal communication to support the provision of professional prosecutorial services. Plan elements include
  - continued funding and circulation of "On the Docket", a newsletter for service employees
  - development of an employee recognition program
  - development and publication of a service brochure
  - an enhanced service website
  - media and orientation training for employees
- Continue to provide timely response to requests from police and provincial enforcement officers for advice on particular cases or direction on matters of criminal law; allocate resources to ensure that sufficient manpower and time are available to respond to requests; and develop a system to record advice.

- Enhance efforts to evaluate the quality of public prosecutorial services to ensure that the high degree of quality is maintained and improved. This will include
  - developing and implementg an enhanced system of evaluation of per diem Crown attorney services
  - continuing the mandate of the Performance Evaluation Committee

Policy Development

- Implement a strategic planning process that seeks to ensure, now and in the future, that the service will be able to deliver professional prosecutorial services.
- Contribute to the development of criminal law policies and procedures in conjunction with federal and provincial Departments of Justice and liaise with law enforcement agencies, government, the judiciary, and professional associations on policy and procedural matters. This includes participating in joint meetings, including federal/provincial/territorial (F/P/T) ministers and deputy ministers meetings, the Coordinating Committee of Senior Justice Officials, and F/P/T Heads of Prosecution, provincial deputy ministers' meetings, and meetings of the provincial Justice Coordinating Committee.
  - Participate in provincial policy initiatives such as the provincial Forms Committee and Restorative Justice.

Public Service Commission

Mission:

The Public Service Commission is responsible for the development and implementation of corporate human resource policy, programs, and services; it must ensure through audit and evaluation the quality and value of human resource management practices; it ensures a fair and effective hiring process; and it is government's agent for collective bargaining.

Strategic Goals

The Public Service Commission is committed to integrating the principles of diversity management in everything it does, including its strategic goals and priorities

- Recruit and retain professional and effective public servants.
- Compensate, reward, and recognize public servants for their contribution to government's goals and priorities.
- Support learning opportunities for employees by offering and encouraging training and development opportunities.
- Ensure effectiveness and compliance of corporate human resource policies and programs through audit and evaluation.
- Support government accountability by coordinating collective bargaining and extending human resource policies to include the broader public service.
- Provide a safe work environment and support the well-being of employees.

Core Business Areas

1. Labour Relations

The Public Service Commission manages the employment relationships for government with its direct employees, including collective bargaining, and develops a comprehensive and integrated approach to labour relations in the broader public sector. This ensures a consistent approach and application, key to fiscal responsibility and accountability, within government and the broader public sector. Activities in this area include

- union/management consultation
- collective bargaining/labour relations
- providing appropriate direction to the public service
- advising the Minister

2. Human Resource Management Policy

Human resource policies give managers and employees guidance as to the direction government wishes to take on a particular issue. The Public Service Commission provides strategic guidance to government on human resource management issues through policies that are aimed at innovative methods for developing the public service to meet changing needs. Activities in this area include

- research in support of human resource policies, programs, and collective bargaining
- policy development, formulation, and implementation
- business planning for the commission
- setting policy and evaluating frameworks for the broader public service
- providing policy advice and assistance to the HR community within government and the broader public sector

3. Human Resource Programs and Services

This area focuses on recruiting, developing, and retaining professional and effective public servants through the following key human resource programs and services:

- diversity management
- staffing
- classification and compensation
- training and development
- occupational health and safety and disability management
- the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- performance management
- succession management

4. Evaluation and Audit

To improve the design, delivery and accountability of corporate human resource policies and programs, the Public Service Commission will staff the Evaluation and Audit section during this fiscal year. Broad consultations with the human resources community and other stakeholders will provide the basis on which the following work plan priorities are set:

- accountability and effectiveness of HR programs and policies as part of an overall commitment to managing for results
- accurate, objective, evidence-based information that supports effective decisions on programs and policies
- assessments of the relevance and effectiveness of policies and programs, including an assessment of risk and alignment with departmental and government-wide priorities

Priorities

1. Labour Relations

- Initiate a comprehensive and integrated strategy for labour relations in the broader public service by
  - identifying the existing capacity and structures
  - determining how they can be most effectively utilized and organized
- Increase the labour relations ability within government by
  - upgrading or refreshing skills within the HR community through provision of the Labour Relations Training Program
  - developing a labour relations training program for the line managers

2. Human Resource Management Policy

- Promote existing Employer of Choice policies and develop new policies in support of the Public Service Commission Employer of Choice goals and priorities.

3. Human Resource Programs and Services

- Implement the Management Compensation Project, which includes an examination of both the job evaluation (classification) and the pay component of the Management Compensation system. This ongoing priority, in support of recruiting and retaining the resources necessary for a productive, sustainable work force, will be realized in the fiscal year 2003–04.
- Coordinate the Bargaining Unit Classification Project, a review of all civil service bargaining unit positions, to develop a new job classification system, which commenced in summer 2001 and is scheduled for completion in the fiscal year 2003–04.

- Implement Performance Management, Phase I, by ensuring that all MCP (management group) managers are trained in setting targets and assessing performance for the MCP group and by updating the core leadership competency assessment instrument for use in the Performance Management System.
- Further develop and build upon existing succession management programs while considering new program possibilities and strategies. This includes
  - implementing government-wide succession management practices to prepare individuals for future vacancies in government
  - further developing Executive Career Assignments Program (ECAP), a provincial public service management development program designed to equip participants with the necessary competencies and experience to assume higher-level positions, as well as further promoting and developing ongoing leadership development programs,
  - establishing clear structures across government departments to strategically address anticipated staff and skill shortages
- Implement a streamlined staffing system with line departments to significantly reduce the time to fill a position. The Public Service Commission will continue to support the staffing function by providing training, posting vacancies, and acting as the final authority.
- Further support and promote wellness in the Nova Scotia public service. The PSC will lead corporate Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) initiatives and work with and support departments and employees in meeting their responsibilities for health and safety. It will also further promote the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and evaluate effectiveness of the program.
- Implement the Human Resource SAP, an information management system currently being implemented across the Nova Scotia public sector, which will integrate human resource with financial data within the Government of Nova Scotia.

4. Evaluation and Audit

- Establish communication and liaison relationships between the management of this function and its clients, including
  - line departments' human resources functions
  - public service entities (as defined in the definition)
  - senior management within the Public Service Commission
  - the Deputy Ministers' Advisory Committee
  - the Corporate Internal Audit Function at Department of Finance
  - the Office of the Auditor General

Sport and Recreation Commission

Mission:

To enhance the quality of life of Nova Scotians through sport and recreation programs and services.

Strategic Goals

- Increase participation in structured and unstructured opportunities for sport, recreation, fitness, and play.
- Increase availability and sustainability of physical infrastructure for sport and recreation.
- Increase the availability and sustainability of individual leaders in sport and recreation.
- Increase commitment and ability of communities and organizations to provide sport and recreation opportunities.

Core Business Areas

1. Participation

Represents a broad range of programs, services, and initiatives designed to increase the level of participation in physical activity by individuals, families, and communities. It also includes activities related to enhancing participants' safety and improving values and ethics in sport and recreation and provides a focus for growth and development of amateur sport.

2. Facilities

Includes a broad range of programs, services, and initiatives to assist municipalities and communities with planning, constructing, renovating, and operating safe facilities for public recreation purposes. The commission also provides consultative services and resources to trail volunteers and trail development partners.

3. Leadership

The quality and quantity of leaders is a critical component in sport and recreation. Examples of the range of leaders affected by commission programs and services include coaches, outdoor leaders, guide/scout leaders, lifeguards, fitness leaders, municipal recreation staff, provincial sport and recreation organization staff, trails groups, and volunteer board members. Also included are a number of programs, services, and initiatives designed to sponsor, support, or deliver leadership training opportunities for a broad range of leaders in sport and recreation at the community, municipal, and provincial levels.

4. Community Capacity

Provides support, through six regional offices, for partnerships between communities, municipalities, and regional agencies and the SRC. Staff work with community recreation and sport organizations, schools, community and district health boards, municipalities, regional development authorities, and provincial and federal government departments.

Priorities

1. Participation

- Work with schools, and community and provincial organizations on the Fair and Safe Play initiative.
- Manage the Canada Games program in conjunction with 44 sport organizations.
- Implement a physical activity strategy for children and youth, which has six goals: public education, opportunities for all, opportunities for girls, leadership, policy development, and research.
- Communicate and apply the results of the population research study into the physical activity levels of children and youth.
- Assist 20 local and provincial groups on the implementation and evaluation of funded pilot projects on physical activity for children and youth.
- Develop active transportation initiatives to encourage more people to integrate walking, cycling, and roller blading into their daily lives.

2. Facilities

- Provide leadership on provincial community use of schools policy.
- Administer the capital grant program.
- Deliver the arena structural safety assessment program.
- Use GIS technology to develop an inventory of sport and recreation facilities in Nova Scotia.
- Identify facility implications of potential opportunities for hosting major events in Nova Scotia.
- Work towards an improved policy for major facility funding.
- Audit newly acquired abandoned rail lines.
- Assist community trail groups with the development and management of trails.

3. Leadership

- Implement the new Competency Based Education and Training Program for coaches.
- Implement a quality control program for sport and recreation service delivery.
- Host training sessions for staff and volunteers of provincial sport organizations.
- Promote and develop outdoor leadership training opportunities, particularly for women and youth.
- Fund and assist Sport Nova Scotia with the pilot project for Sport Future Leaders.
- Provide technical training and resources on trail construction and risk management in co-operation with provincial trail groups.
- Assess and recommend any changes to the Volunteer Protection Act, which was tabled in the Legislature in November 2001.

4. Community Capacity

- Assist provincial sports organizations with outcome planning, knowledge of SRC programs, and policies and mechanisms to deal with abuse and harassment issues.
- Assist municipal recreation departments and community groups with effective management and delivery of public recreation services linked with SRC and other government programs and services.
- Ensure that the province's interests are represented in the development of a National Sport Policy and coordinate public input into the proposed national policy action plan.
- Work with communities in support of building capacity to host major regional, national, and international sporting events.

Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Mission:

To advance equality, fairness, and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia

Strategic Goals

- To increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status.
- To promote women's economic equality.
- To reduce violence against women in communities, workplaces, and families.
- To improve the health and well-being of women and their families.

Core Business Areas

1. Policy and Research

The council advises the Minister on concerns and priorities of women and formulates strategies and options to address these. The council conducts quantitative and qualitative research, in consultation with academic and community groups and government departments, to ensure that advice is a feasible, relevant, timely, and accurate guide to governmental action.

2. Information and Education

The council collects information on women's issues and disseminates it to the Minister, council members and staff, and other key stakeholders, including the media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, it informs and influences key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women and about council and government priorities, activities, accomplishments, and opportunities for improvement in addressing women's issues.

3. Community Liaison and Rural Outreach

Through council members and the Field Work Program, the council brings forward concerns of women from across Nova Scotia, with particular attention to historically disadvantaged groups, and partners with communities and agencies to advance equality for women in programs and services.

Priorities

1. Policy and Research

- Maintain council effectiveness through orientation program for new members, support for the Council Chair, media training for new members, and professional and administrative support for council work.
- Participate in the FPT forum of Senior Status of Women Officials and support the Minister in the FPT forum of Status of Women Ministers, with particular focus on women's entry to occupations in high-growth areas of the economy.
- Increase the ability of government policy staff to include the concerns and interests of women in policy development through development and dissemination of gender-based analysis tools.
- Prepare and present briefs on major initiatives and legislative changes affecting women.
- Inform public and policy audiences on issues related to women's economic security through publication of the fifth volume of Women in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Series to provide updated statistical information on women's paid and unpaid work; implement a Roundtable on Women's Economic Security.
- Continue the Healthy Balance research program in partnership with the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Dalhousie University, and the IWK Health Centre. This is the second year of a five-year program of research, which has been funded for $1.7 million by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, to investigate the health impacts of caregiving roles on Nova Scotians.
- Collaborate with government and non-government agencies on issues related to women's sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS concerns.

2. Information and Education

- Implement media relations activities outlined in the communications strategy for the advisory council's 25th anniversary, as resources allow, and continue to mark key dates and events throughout the year, with particular attention to International Women's Day, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women, and Women's History Month; ensure public awareness of council accomplishments and positions through appropriate communications plans and actions.
- Support the Minister's ongoing information needs; support research and community liaison functions through adequate informational support; provide information and referral to some 2000 inquiries per annum and; maintain and enhance the council's website, responding to identified information needs.

3. Community Liaison and Rural Outreach

- Continue workshops to promote women's leadership and participation in public affairs.
- Work with organizations such as the Women in CED Network, women's business groups, Techsploration, Hypatia, and L'Association des Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse to foster economic equality and lifelong learning in all occupational areas, particularly in fields where women remain under-represented.
- Participate on the Coordinating Committee and Field Teams of the Sustainable Communities Initiative.

Sydney Tar Ponds Agency

Mission:

To focus Nova Scotia's efforts in the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up project and to make the most effective use of provincial resources in co-operation with government and community partners.

Strategic Goals

- In the capacity of lead agency, within the framework of the funding agreement between government partners and community stakeholders, implement projects and initiatives in the pursuit of the clean-up of the Muggah Creek watershed at the direction of the Executive Committee.
- On behalf of Nova Scotia, engage government partners in the negotiation of a renewed funding agreement for the clean-up of the Muggah Creek watershed.
- Communicate effectively with the public, both directly and through the media, about steps being taken to clean up the Muggah Creek watershed, and coordinate these communications with affected provincial departments and agencies, other government partners, and other JAG community stakeholders.
- Effectively deploy and coordinate provincial resources in the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up and, where appropriate, the decommissioning of the Sydney steel plant, in particular through Sydney Environmental Resources Limited (SERL), a Nova Scotia Crown corporation.
- Optimize the working interface between government partners and community stakeholders in the clean-up of the Muggah Creek watershed and Sydney steel plant.

Core Business Areas

1. Contract Management

Oversee management of contracts within the framework of the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up funding agreement between government partners and community stakeholders and in keeping with directives of the Executive Committee responsible for the agreement.

2. Communication

Communicate with the community in a planned, proactive way in the development, evaluation, and implementation of specific clean-up recommendations.

3. Funding

Represent Nova Scotia's interests in the negotiation of a renewed funding agreement for the clean-up of the Muggah Creek watershed.

4. Support to Sydney Environmental Resources Limited (SERL)

Optimize the impact of SERL, a Nova Scotia Crown corporation, on the province's role in the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up process and decommissioning of Sydney steel plan by supporting the corporation's core business areas.

5. Coordination

Direct Nova Scotia's involvement in the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up in a planned and considered fashion to optimize the impact of the effort and facilitate progress and efficiency.

Priorities

1. Contract Management

- Actively participate in and facilitate the executive decision-making process as part of the funding agreement between government partners and community stakeholders respecting the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up.
- In the capacity of lead agency, initiate and frame projects for which Nova Scotia has contract responsibility.
- Cause projects to be implemented in a timely manner in keeping with agreed upon schedules.

2. Communication

- Develop and execute a plan, in co-operation with JAG and government partners, for communicating effectively with the public, both directly and through the media, about steps being taken to clean up the Muggah Creek watershed.
- Take a lead role in deliberations of the Interagency Communications Advisory Group (ICAC) and the Public Education and Participation Working Group (PEP) of JAG.
- Initiate, monitor, and respond to media coverage of issues relating to the Muggah Creek watershed clean-up.

3. Funding

- Engage government partners in negotiations for the purpose of producing a second generation funding agreement for the clean-up of the Muggah Creek watershed.

4. Support to Sydney Environmental Resources Limited (SERL)

- Foster frequent and regular internal communications between SERL, Sydney Tar Ponds Agency, and Sydney Steel Corporation.
- Interface with the Board of Directors, SERL, and Sysco.
- Guide SERL in its core business areas.
- Facilitate coordinated planning among SERL, Sysco, and the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency.

5. Coordination

- Foster frequent and regular internal communication through the implementation of a newly developed, broadly based communications plan.
- Facilitate strategic planning to ensure effective provincial input.
- Encourage regular internal reporting.
- Advance strategic and timely recommendations to key government decision makers.

Treasury and Policy Board

Mission:

To ensure that the expenditure and policy initiatives of the public service are planned, communicated, and implemented in a way that reflects the priorities of government and inspires confidence in the people of Nova Scotia.

Strategic Goals

- Provide high-quality analysis and recommendations to the Executive Council and Treasury and Policy Board (TPB).
- Improve communication between elected officials and the public service, including third-party entities.
- Improve accountability of government and the public service, including third-party entities.
- Strengthen the corporate leadership of the public service.
- Promote the implementation of government's strategic plan through the improved integration of planning, budgeting, and communications.
- Improve systems, processes, and procedures required for effective and efficient administration of government.

Core Business Areas

1. Support to Treasury and Policy Board/Cabinet

This area includes managing paper flow to and from Treasury and Policy Board, developing the TPB agenda and providing a critical analysis of policy and expenditure proposals to the Executive Council and Treasury and Policy Board as background to the decision-making process.

2. Strategic Planning and Budgeting

This area includes assisting the Executive Council to develop and communicate its strategic agenda; developing and implementing processes to link allocations of funds with policy direction and priorities; and analysing and advising on department and agency budgets to ensure that allocations and reallocations support priorities, suggesting corrective action when necessary.

3. Coordination of Corporate Policies and Priorities

This area includes identifying major policy issues and facilitating collaborative policy development on issues that cross departmental boundaries, and initiating, and sometimes leading, corporate projects.

4. Supporting Effective Administration of Government

This area includes developing and communicating guidelines and standards for administration of government, advising on government structure and programs, and supporting senior leadership development.

Priorities

1. Support to Treasury and Policy Board/Cabinet

- Revise the (paper-flow) process for submission and analysis of policy proposals, requests for resources, and other transactions to TPB and Cabinet to ensure that Executive Council receives full and comprehensive analysis and advice on proposals.
- Develop a new information management tracking system (FileNet) to record and track proposals, decisions, communications, and implementation processes to ensure effective implementation and follow-up of these decisions.
- Provide staff support for Cabinet/TPB and its subcommittees.

2. Strategic Planning and Budgeting

- Assist the Executive Council in ongoing strategic planning and development of the policy agenda and communicate results throughout government.
- Liaise with Communications Nova Scotia and the Office of the Premier to ensure clear, consistent communications on the government's strategic agenda, as well as directions for implementation.
- Prepare government's annual business plan consistent with corporate goals and priorities, thereby communicating the direction of government for the coming year.
- Prepare the annual estimates book, in consultation with Department of Finance.

- Prepare and publish the annual government accountability report, reporting on performance against the previous year's business plan goals and priorities.
- Refine outcome measures and assessment processes for government for the purposes of improved accountability and transparency.
- Monitor and respond to quarterly departmental updates to identify issues and initiatives for the following six months, in order to improve planning, scheduling, and communications across government.
- Increase emphasis on monitoring departments' monthly forecasts of program expenditures and recommend remedial action, where necessary.
- Develop processes, in consultation with the Department of Finance, to better integrate budgeting, policy development, and business planning, including implementation of an annual planning and budgeting calendar.
- In consultation with the Department of Finance and other relevant entities, review and update the Appropriations Act and the sections of the Finance Act dealing with additional appropriations for the purposes of aligning the acts with the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) guidelines that the Province of Nova Scotia has adopted.
- Review the format of materials prepared for the Legislature for the budget debate, in consultation with the Department of Finance.

3. Coordination of Corporate Policies and Priorities

- Review and analyse proposals submitted to the Legislation Committee to ensure that proposed legislation is consistent with policy direction and priorities.
- Facilitate collaborative policy development across departments and initiate corporate policy projects, including
  - development of mechanisms to strengthen the accountability framework for departments and third-party entities
  - leading the implementation of a revised program inventory and costing methodology

- completing development of a user fee policy and assisting departments with its implementation
- facilitating the implementation of an appropriate skills agenda mechanism within government
- developing a new governance and operating structure for the Policy Advisory Council (PAC), a vehicle for identifying corporate policy issues and coordinating the development of these issues
- strengthening relationships with other public policy agents, including the academic sector

- Facilitate supportive relationships with departments to ensure that departmental initiatives are coordinated and consistent with government's agenda.
- Effectively communicate government's priorities, plans, and policies to departments and third-party entities to support informed and effective policy development, program delivery, and management practices.

4. Supporting Effective Corporate Administration of Government

- Extend the use of performance contracts for senior officials beyond the deputy minister level.
- In collaboration with other central agencies, clarify roles, responsibilities, and interrelationships of these agencies and facilitate the development of closer working relationships.
- Promote mechanisms for improved internal, government-wide communications that will focus on the dissemination of corporate goals and priorities throughout the various levels of government and support a culture that values comprehensive communications across and within government units.
- Collect, update, and maintain government's administrative policies and procedures as published in the management manuals and improve accessibility of these policies through Web-based products.
- Support the improvement of Nova Scotia's business climate by facilitating regulatory reform and promoting the adoption of "red tape reduction" principles throughout government's operations.

- Develop an information management system for corporate issues project tracking.
- In consultation with the Public Service Commission, plan and support initiatives to develop a high-quality leadership cadre in the public service.
- Collaborate with the Public Service Commission to develop initiatives that promote public-sector values.
- Research and promote best practices on the delivery and evaluation of government services and provide departments with tools to assist them to implement these practices.

Technology and Science Secretariat

Mission:

As a catalyst for technology-based innovation, the Technology and Science Secretariat provides leadership in optimizing the enabling effects of innovation, with a mandate to deliver better government and to stimulate economic growth and social development in Nova Scotia.

Strategic Goals

- To provide leadership, knowledge, and strategic direction for government's vision of technology and information to be used collaboratively—across government departments, throughout the broader public sector, and with business partners—to effectively support government's business vision of accessible, quality service, efficient government, and leveraging of information.
- To generate leading technology and innovation infrastructure and capacities in Nova Scotia that stimulate and support economic and social growth.

Core Business Areas

1. Corporate Strategies

- This area supports the development and implementation of corporate government technology and information policies, strategies, and solutions in the areas of information management, technology management, business transformation and strategic support. Key initiatives include the IT and IM Programs, a SAP provincial/MASH-sector projects office, an e-government strategy, as well as support to the Business and Technology Advisory Committee (BTAC) and the Information Technology Directors Forum (ITDF).

2. Provincial Technology and Innovation Initiatives

- TSS leads policy, programs, and multi-partner initiatives designed to strengthen provincial IT and innovation infrastructure and capacities. Key initiatives include the Information Economy Initiative (IEI), the Community Access Program (CAP), the Research Development and Innovation Policy (RDI), the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI), telecommunications policy and infrastructure development, and science promotion and awareness.

Priorities

1. Corporate Strategies

- Support the development and implementation of corporate government technology and information policies, strategies, and solutions in the areas of information management, technology management, business transformation and strategic support.
- Continue development of the Technology Management Program with a specific focus on the following components:
  - management of infrastructure shared services implementation
  - Data Centre Strategy
  - Application Hosting Strategy
- Continue development of the Information Management Program with a specific focus on the following components:
  - information policy framework
  - information and document management (e.g., Filenet)
  - establishment of an information protection and security program
- Continue to provide support to the Business and Technology Advisory Committee (BTAC) and the Information Technology Directors Forum (ITDF)
- Lead and coordinate the development of an e-government strategy
- Establish a SAP program management office.

2. Provincial Technology and Innovation Initiatives.

- Provide a visible, coordinated provincial government point of contact for technology, innovation, and research and development to help advance the growth of these key sectors.
- Enhance research, development, and innovation systems and linkages through establishment and support of the pending Premier's Council on Technology and Innovation and other collaborative initiatives.
- Build on the foundations for growth in the Nova Scotia information technology sector by further developing the federal-provincial Information Economy Initiative and its investment strategies and development partnerships, and link its work with the strategic directions of the *Opportunities for Prosperity Strategy*.
- Ensure continuing, affordable public access and use of information technology through the further development of the Industry Canada Community Access Program and the network of Nova Scotia public access sites.
- Provide provincial government leadership and coordination for the further development of Smart Communities throughout Nova Scotia.
- Lead the implementation process for the revised Research Development and Innovation Strategy.
- Monitor the quality of Nova Scotia's IT, technology, and innovation assets, the results achieved, and the innovation processes in place (with particular emphasis on rural areas) and ensure that the government is getting the best possible leverage from its related investments.
- Participate in and support the Nova Scotia Sustainable Communities Initiative.
- Participate, with other partners, in the improvement of science promotion and awareness throughout the province.
- Provide ongoing provincial leadership to make the most of the positive impact of telecommunications-related policy and infrastructure development.

Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board

Mission:

The UARB is an independent quasi-judicial tribunal tasked with the legal responsibility to carry out the mandate assigned to it by government through statute and regulation.

Strategic Goals

- To produce legally correct, timely, and well-reasoned decisions for all applications and appeals.
- To maintain a safe and economically strong motor carrier fleet to meet the needs of the travelling public.
- To provide agreed-upon shared support to other agencies, boards, and commissions.

Core Business Areas

1. Quasi-judicial Function

This is the primary function of the Utility and Review Board—to exercise the powers of the Legislature as delegated by the various statutes. Operations are conducted through the board members and supported with administrative and advisory staff.

2. Motor Carrier (Public Passenger) Administration

This involves the safety inspection, licensing administration, and enforcement function relating to the public passenger industry and some not-for-profit organizations. Operations are undertaken by the staff of the Motor Carrier Division.

Priorities

1. Quasi-judicial Function

- Maintain a sufficient number of board members with an appropriate mix of expertise in order to effectively carry out the assigned mandate.
- Maintain a support infrastructure sufficient to ensure that hearings and decision-making operations are not impaired. This includes ensuring sufficient advisory and administrative staff are available and that there are adequate hearing and office facilities.
- Maintain essential independence.
- Maintain sufficient administrative capability to satisfy agreed on support to other agencies, boards, and commissions.
- Determine what, if any, immediate tasks are expected with the recent proclamation of the Railways Act.

2. Motor Carrier (Public Passenger) Administration

- Maintain current inspection and inspection coordination levels to meet statutory requirement to inspect all public passenger vehicles twice annually.
- Maintain sufficient enforcement capability to be able to respond to complaints.
- Update 12-year-old computerized licensing system in order to minimize costs associated with licensing administration, provide inspection staff with accurate and timely information critical to their activities, and avoid failure due to technological obsolescence.
- If regulations are amended to include unregulated van operations, increase inspection capability sufficient to satisfy inspection demands.
- Maintain current minimum staffing for administration of licensing and renewal.
- Review existing procedures regarding inspections and business processes to ensure that maximum efficiencies are realized.

Voluntary Planning

Mission:

To measurably improve the social and economic well-being of all Nova Scotians by providing the Premier and Cabinet with valuable volunteer and citizen-based advice on relevant policy issues for today and for the future.

Strategic Goals

- Improve quality of life for Nova Scotians.
- Contribute to enhanced government policy and legislation.
- Ensure direct citizen participation in policy development.
- Address long-term priorities—uniquely.
- Provide value and relevance to government and citizens.

Core Business Areas

1. Major Task Force Reviews

In recent years, Voluntary Planning has accepted several major projects assigned by the provincial government. The Fiscal Management Task Force, and more recently, the Non-Resident Land Ownership Task Force are two examples.

In both cases, Voluntary Planning recruited a committee of knowledgeable volunteers to thoroughly research the subject, to give all Nova Scotians an opportunity to provide input and comment, and to produce their best advice in the form of recommendations.

This is an extremely effective way to reach sound and broadly accepted strategies on complex public policy issues. The Voluntary Planning process considers the long-term benefit of the entire province and takes full advantage of the opportunity to increase public knowledge and awareness on the issue at hand.

2. Sectors Scanning and Discussions

To fulfill Voluntary Planning's promise as a valuable and influential contributor to policy making in Nova Scotia, the Board of Directors relies heavily on the advice provided by six teams—or sectors—of volunteer senior policy advisors. These newly formed sectors are replacing Voluntary Planning's former committees and will better position the organization to cover the entire spectrum of society.

Led by the sector chairperson, each member will contribute to an environmental scanning process and participate in discussions resulting in policy briefings or proposals. A major emphasis for each sector will be an annual presentation to the voluntary Board of Directors, at which time they will bring forward immediate and pressing policy priorities and issues.

Throughout the year, members of each sector interact as a team by meeting when necessary and otherwise operate by taking full advantage of information technology provided for teleconferencing or web-based collaboration.

3. Board Leadership

Voluntary Planning has appointed a new Board of Directors. This eminent group will be key to successfully achieving organizational goals.

Priorities

1. Major Task Force Reviews

- Identify policy areas for task force review and propose several and conduct at least one major task force project in 2002-03.

2. Sector Scanning and Discussions

- Recruit volunteers and fully activate the following six sectors during the current year:
  - Natural Resources
  - Fiscal Management Policy
  - Education and Lifelong Learning
  - Economic Growth and Competitiveness
  - Environmental Quality and Stewardship
  - Health and Social Well-being

3. Board Leadership

- Offer advice directly to the Premier and Cabinet as requested.
- Bring proposals and advice forward to government; negotiate terms of reference for new project work.
- Authorize a promotions approach that helps Voluntary Planning adopt a higher profile within Nova Scotia.
- Support the identification and implementation of information technology for Web-based collaboration with geographically diverse groups.